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A DEFENCE OF THE ANSWER TO THE REMARKS UPON Dr. *Clarke's* EXPOSITION OF THE *Church-Catechism.*

WHEREIN

The Difference between *moral* and *positive* Duties is fully stated.

Being a REPLY to a Pamphlet entitled,

The Nature, Obligation, and Efficacy of the Sacraments consider'd.

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A DEFENCE OF THE ANSWER TO THE REMARKS

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HEN I publiſh'd an *Anſwer to the Remarks* made *upon* Dr. *Clarke*'s Expoſition of the Church-Catechiſm, I was not without expectation of a reply from the *the Author* of them; nor did I doubt but that every thing would be ſuggeſted in its proper place which might tend to create a

reverence for the " venerable Sacraments," and which might depretiate *moral Virtue*. I imagined that what was ſaid by me, amongſt many other things, about the obligation of *Morality* would tend to provoke a vindication of the remarks. But then I muſt acknowledge that ſo large a treatiſe of *The Nature, Obligation and Efficacy of the Sacraments*, was what I did not expect; nor did I conceive that *one Article* of the debate would be reſumed, and all the reſt dropt in ſilence. But this has been the turn taken, and I muſt purſue it. The " Author of the
p. 1. Anſwer" did but "*ſuperficially* touch upon the ſeveral matters contained in the remarks." And yet *ſuperficially* as he touched them, the endeavour to " give ſatisfaction" upon only *one* of them, has already produced 88 pages: How many more are
Ibid. we to expect, when a " diſtinct reply" ſhall be made to the remaining *thirteen* articles? And to what a ſize will this debate ſwell, when the Author of the Remarks ſhall think fit to vindicate what he has ſo *profoundly* ſaid about the " Efficacy of the Sacraments?" For I am as far from being ſatisfied as I was when the *Remarks* were firſt publiſhed: new difficulties appear; freſh contradictions to ſcripture and reaſon are urged; doctrines are taught which have no manner of foundation in the Bible; in ſhort, inſtead of

of having this *one* point clear'd, and inſtead of " giving me Satisfaction" in it, as he pro- p. 1.
pos'd, 'tis now by words and art cover'd with darkneſs that may even be felt.

The preſent debate originally aroſe from hence, that Dr. *Clarke* aſſerted that the ſacrament of the Lord's-Supper, and *all other* poſitive inſtitutions *have the nature only* Expoſ. p. 281, 282. *of* means *to an* end, *and that therefore they are never to be compared with* moral virtues, *nor can ever be of any uſe or benefit without them, nor can be in any degree equivalents for the want of them.*

This aſſertion was oppoſed by the Remarker; who maintained that the ſacraments were not only *means* to virtue, but " *additional improvements* upon virtue: Rem. p. 84, " they ſupply where moral virtues fall 85, 86. " ſhort: they relieve where the other can- " not: they finiſh what the other begins, " our juſtification and ſalvation." And again; " moral virtues are rather to be " conſider'd as a means to an end, becauſe " they are previous qualifications for the " ſacraments, and have no proper efficacy " towards procuring ſalvation till they are " improved, and render'd acceptable by " theſe chriſtian performances. By moral " virtues we ſhall never ordinarily come " to Chriſt, nor at heaven, nor to the pre- " ſence of God: But by the help of the

" ſacra-

" ſacraments ſuperadded to crown and " finiſh the other we may arrive at Chri- " ſtian perfection."

Perhaps never was a controverſy more artificially embarraſſed than the preſent has been by the Remarker. 'Twill be therefore neceſſary to fix the meaning of the terms, moral virtue, moral duties, and poſitive duties, which occur ſo frequently.

MORAL VIRTUE conſiſts in the conformity of our actions to the reaſons of things, in whatever relates to other intelligent beings, or our ſelves.

MORAL DUTIES are ſuch acts as we are obliged to exert, in conformity to the reaſons of things. Gratitude, *e. g.* is a moral duty: we cannot but perceive a certain agreement in the ideas of gratitude, and kindneſs receiv'd: and this agreement is of that kind, that all intelligent beings muſt perceive it as much, and as exact, as they all muſt perceive that two and two make four. I do not ſay that there is the ſame agreement betwixt moral ideas as betwixt arithmetical ones; but that there is a congruity, a fitneſs, an agreement of ideas, as *certain*, and as *viſible* to all intelligent beings, as there is in any arithmetical ones whatever.

POSITIVE DUTIES are ſuch as we are oblig'd to, not from any reaſon of the

thing, but purely from the command of him that preſcribes them. Theſe therefore not being founded on, or ariſing from, the relations of things, may ceaſe, or may be changed; and in conſequence men that once have been oblig'd to do them, may be freed from all obligation of obſerving them, by the ſole change of his will who at firſt enjoin'd them.

There is, I think, but one word more which requires an explication; and that is OBLIGATION.

There is an agreement of ſome ideas, which is eaſily perceiv'd; and there is a manifeſt diſagreement in others; in others ſtill there is no manner of relation at all. Now where-ever any creature is made capable of perceiving a real agreement or diſagreement, and becomes conſcious of the relations, or circumſtances, of things, if he acts contrary to ſuch perception, he acts contrary to the end for which ſuch a power of perceiving was given him. Reaſon is that power by which we perceive the ſeveral relations of things: to act inconſiſtent with Reaſon, is to act contrary to the end for which ſuch a faculty was given us. *Obligation* therefore ſignifies, that tie we have upon us to act agreeably to thoſe faculties or powers which we are veſted with by God.

From

From this account of the terms it follows plainly, that moral duties, and positive duties, ought never to be confounded; and that moral duties, which arise from the reasons of things, are in their natures different from positive duties, which arise from the mere will of the prescriber.

Moral Virtue consists in the conformity of our actions to the relations, or reasons, of things; and therefore this must be obligatory to all intelligent beings, even previous to any laws, or commands, or injunctions, divine or human. The relations of things are certain, fixt, and unchangeable; they are of that nature that God himself is so far subject to them, that he cannot act but according to them; and if he were to act *contrary* to them, he wou'd act contrary to right and truth, *i. e.* he would act unreasonably. Now if this be the case, moral virtue must be obligatory at all times, in all places: and those things which derive all their obligation from the command of a prescriber, and consequently are changeable at the pleasure of the institutor, cannot have the same sort of obligation, because the one cannot be altered, whereas the other may. Supposing therefore a positive duty were to interfere with a moral duty, (which is no impossible supposition) the positive duty must give way,

because

becauſe it is in its nature changeable; whereas the moral duty muſt never be violated, becauſe 'tis unchangeable in its nature.

But in order to clear up this matter, I ſhall examin what the Remarker has ſuggeſted, that thence we may form a clearer judgment of the nature and obligation of moral and poſitive duties.

He begins, "All obligation ariſes from p. 15--16.
"ſome *law*, and it is the *divine law* that
"conſtitutes moral good and evil. Things
"may be *naturally* good or bad, that is,
"may have a natural tendency to promote
"happineſs or miſery, may be materially
"good or evil; *i. e.* uſeful or hurtful,
"*previous to any law*: But they cannot
"be formally and morally good and evil
"without reſpect to ſome law."

That things may be "uſeful, or hurt-
"ful, previous to any law" is here granted: Nor will it be denied, I gueſs, that it does not depend upon any *law*, that *two* and *two* are equal to *four*. This ſort of relations had been the ſame; ſuppoſing that God had never created any beings whatever. Now juſt in the ſame manner the relations of moral acts to one another, are as neceſſary as the relations of natural acts: nor is it a divine law, or the will of God that conſtitutes moral good or evil,

but ſomething antecedent to any divine law, even the relations of things to one another, which were the ſame in the divine mind before moral agents were created, as they are now. When there were no beings in the world; I mean antecedent to any creation, the three angles of a triangle were equal to two right ones: This was equally true, previous to the exiſtence of any triangle; nor cou'd any law have made it otherwiſe. So likewiſe the relation of gratitude to beneficence wou'd be the ſame as it now is, even ſuppoſing there were no other intelligent being in the world but God alone, and exactly for the ſame reaſon as the three angles of a triangle would be equal to two right ones, tho' there were no triangle in the world. 'Tis not a *law* which *makes* the one or the other: But all law muſt be founded upon theſe relations, which are previous to it; and conſequently all law muſt be no more than a command to obſerve, or to take heed not to tranſgreſs theſe relations.

p. 16. The reaſon given why things "cannot "be morally good and evil without re-"ſpect to ſome law natural or revealed, "is, *where no law is there is no tranſ-"greſſion.*" I anſwer, When God exiſted antecedent to all creatures, he had the ideas of all things preſent to his mind; he ſaw

their

their relations and habitudes; and he always did, and always will act according to them: In this conſiſts the rectitude of his nature; and when he made this world and all things in it, he made every thing according to thoſe Ideal relations. Why now does God always act according to them, or in other words, according to what is right? Is it in virtue of any *law?* Is it, that he is obliged by any command of a ſuperior? No. But things, or rather the relations of things are what they are, antecedent to any *law*; and moral good and evil is ſuch, without reſpect to any *law*: 'Tis founded upon an agreement of relations previous to any declaration of any ones will, and conſequently is obligatory, ſuppoſing no law at all were given.

The Remarker indeed ſays,— "I know p. 16, 17.
"ſome perſons, and Dr. *Clarke* himſelf a-
"mongſt others, have fancied I know not
"what *obliging* and binding force in the
"nature and reaſons of things, conſidered
"as previous or antecedent to all laws
"natural or revealed. But — Obligation
"antecedent to all law is a contradiction
"and flat abſurdity. — All obligation re-
"ſolves into the force of divine law, and
"if poſitive duties derive their obligation
"from the very ſame ſource that all other
"duties do, it is very manifeſt that poſi-

" tive precepts are as ſtrictly obligatory as
" any moral ones can be, conſidered merely
" as moral, other circumſtances being equal.
" The authority of the ſame lawgiver is
" the ſame in both, and ſo the commands
" are alike obligatory for the time being."

Here 'tis affirmed, that all *Obligation* is reſolved into ſome *Law*, and is declared to be " a contradiction and flat abſurdity" if conſider'd as " antecedent to all Law". Since then by ſuppoſition, it is a divine Law which conſtitutes an action morally good, and gives it both " the name and
p. 13. " nature of virtue," the conſequence is, that it was the arbitrary will of God, whether even vice with all its deformities might not have been equally valued by him as virtue is. Had God commanded men to be unjuſt, or ungrateful, it wou'd have been morally good to be unjuſt and ungrateful: And it only depended upon his good pleaſure, whether he would give us the *preſent Law*; ſince he might as well have given us the direct contrary. On the other hand, I maintain, that God *could not* but act reaſonably; he could not have commanded intelligent beings to be ungrateful to benefactors; he could not have made by any law, vice to be agreeable to himſelf, and fit to be practiſed by intelligent beings,

more

more than he could have made two and two equal to ten.

Now as this is not in the divine power, ſo it is not, I preſume, in his power to have commanded an intelligent being to be ungrateful or unjuſt. That great, that peerleſs being who governs all things, and who made all things that are made, cannot but act according to what is fit and right, according to the relation of things in his mind; and if He who is all perfection *cannot* but act ſo, it can be no "abſurdity or contradiction" to ſay, he is *obliged* to do ſo.

When 'tis ſaid, that "*Obligation* ante-"cedent to all law is a contradiction or "abſurdity", the word, Obligation, is then uſed in a mere civil ſenſe; juſt as 'tis uſed when we are ſpeaking of poſitive laws. But when God exiſted, before any creatures were made, he even then conform'd all his actions to the reaſons of things; nay; he could not but act according to the rectitude of his nature. Now what was the reaſon why God cou'd not but act *rightly?* What *law* was there which obliged him to act reaſonably? Where there was no law, and yet God cou'd not but act according to what was right, there was the higheſt obligation poſſible.

'Tis therefore an abſurdity in this Author, to ſay as he does, that "poſitive du-

"ties

" ties derive their obligation from the very " ſame ſource that all other duties do". By the very terms, poſitive duties derive their obligation from the *Will* of the preſcriber, whereas moral duties derive their obligation from the reaſons and relations of things. Different foundations; and different reaſons of duties theſe! and conſequently of very different obligations.

p. 17. But 'tis added, " it is always our bounden " duty to obey the commands of God, be " the matter of them moral or poſitive". This will not be denied: the only queſtion is, whether or no all poſitive duties be not deſign'd as *means* to an *end*. For tho' it be our duty to obey them: Yet to ſay that a poſitive duty is of *equal* excellence, or value with a moral one, is juſt the ſame abſurdity as to ſay that the means are as valuable as the end, which is to be obtained by thoſe means. An abſurdity which none but a man of great *depth* can maintain.

As this *firſt* point about the grounds of obligation is much miſtaken by our Author, let us next examine into the meaning of the *ſecond* thing which he undertakes to main-
p. 18. tain; which is, " That there may be as great " virtue (or greater) in obeying poſitive pre- " cepts, as in obeying moral ones". He ſuppoſes that he has proved that " obe-
ibid. " dience to poſitive precepts is really *moral*,

" and

" and is properly virtue"; and now he is going " to ſhew that it may be in ſome " caſes greater virtue." *ibid.*

Every word almoſt in theſe propoſitions wants a particular explication, before the remarker ſhould go about the proof of what he deſigns to maintain. *e. g.* He ſhould have told us what he means by " as great " or greater virtue": What is the meaning of, " Obedience to poſitive precepts is really " Moral"; What is intended by " Obedi- " ence to poſitive precepts is properly vir- " tue": And laſtly, What is the meaning of, ſuch " Obedience may be as great, or greater " virtue than Obedience to moral virtues." Each of theſe propoſitions is laid down, as if it were ſelf-evident; and yet I dare not preſume to ſay that I have Ideas to them, ſuch as our Author has; and as I ſuppoſe he imagines the common reader may have. *e. g.*

1. Virtue conſiſts in the conformity of our actions to the reaſons of Things, in every thing which relates either to any other perſon, or to our ſelves. Now " great virtue" ſometimes means exact conformity; and then, " greater virtue," muſt mean a more exact conformity to the reaſons of things than exact. But this I think is not the meaning of this Author, becauſe 'tis too flat an abſurdity even for him to maintain: Again;

When

When any one is paſſionate, peeviſh, amorous, *&c.* and yet reſiſts the impulſe of theſe paſſions; 'tis in common ſpeech ſaid, that ſuch a one's *Virtue is greater* than that of one who is virtuous, but has not ſuch impetuous paſſions to ſtruggle with: By which we mean to expreſs the maſterly conduct of ſuch a perſon, the greatneſs of the temptations he laboured under, the ſtrong affections he ſubdued, and the general goodneſs of his behaviour under a conſtitution that was propenſe to vice. But neither, I ſuppoſe, is this our Author's meaning, becauſe obedience to poſitive precepts cannot be "greater virtue," than exact conformity to the reaſons of things is: and when we ſay 'tis "greater virtue" in the inſtance before us, we mean I think little more than to expreſs our applauſe of it, in a looſe and improper way of ſpeaking. Sometimes by "greater virtue" we mean no more than a comparative approach to virtue; but in this ſenſe there cannot be a *greater* virtue in obeying poſitive precepts than in obeying moral ones, becauſe obedience to moral duties is virtue it ſelf, and there can't be greater virtue than virtue. 2. "He ſays Obedi-
"ence to poſitive precepts is really moral". If by this is meant, that in obedience to poſitive precepts there is a conformity of mens actions to a certain law;— this is true,

and 'tis a juſt obſervation. But then 'tis nothing to the purpoſe: For tho' here is a conformity of actions to a law, yet it is to the *poſitive* law which is preſcribed; and then to ſay, that "obedience to poſitive "precepts is really moral," is only ſaying it is an act of obedience. 'Tis not proved by the uſe of the word, *moral*, that poſitive duties and moral duties have the ſame ſource, or the ſame excellency; or that poſitive duties are more than means to morality. 3. 'Tis ſaid, that "obedience to poſitive duties is properly virtue". This requires too a particular explication. That obedience to poſitive duties is obedience, is clear; but when 'tis ſaid that 'tis *virtue*, 'tis hard to gueſs what idea is affixed to that word by the remarker. Virtue ſometimes means no more than what is in any particular country commendable: And in this ſenſe 'tis true that obedience to poſitive duties is virtue, *i. e.* 'tis commendable. It ſignifies ſometimes actions conformable to God's poſitive command; and then This propoſition -- obedience is virtue -- means no more than that it is conformable to the law preſcribed. Virtue ſignifies ſometimes the doing things right and good *in themſelves*. In this ſenſe obedience to poſitive laws, which by the definition are not right and good *in themſelves*, but their goodneſs depends upon

the will of the preſcriber, cannot be virtue in the ſame ſenſe as obedience to moral commands is. Unleſs therefore one knew the Remarker's meaning here, 'tis impoſſible to judge of this propoſition.

But let us grant that obedience to a poſitive duty may be call'd virtue in ſome ſenſe; yet 'twill not follow that obedience to poſitive duties is as excellent as obedience to moral duties. For tho' it be "an eternal "and unchangeable maxim that God is "to be obeyed in whatever he commands," and tho' obedience to him be proved to be a moral act, and diſobedience be an immoral act, yet ſtill it may be true that the poſitive duty is enjoined only as a means to moral virtue. And if ſo, 'tis not enough to ſay that obedience to God is an act of virtue; for how true ſoever that is, yet if the thing enjoin'd be only in order to a moral end, it is not of equal value with the end. To obey God in a poſitive duty ſhould therefore, I think, more properly be called a virtuous means to ſome moral end, rather than "greater virtue," or an "im-"provement upon virtue." However ſince the remarker imagines it to be "greater "virtue than morality," and attempts to ſhew it, 'tis fit to examine what he urges.

1ſt.

1*ſt*. Says the remarker, " If the poſitive p. 18.
" command be more difficult, requiring a
" greater degree of ſelf-denial," then " there
" may be *greater virtue* in obeying the
" poſitive command, than in obeying
" moral" commands. As an inſtance of this he obſerves, that God " proved *A-*
" *braham* by two very extraordinary po-
" ſitive commands; one to leave his own country and his father's houſe — the other, " to ſacrifice his moſt dearly beloved
" ſon." Here were " a *complication* of
" virtues, and *elevated degrees* of each p. 19.
" were ſhewn in thoſe two inſtances of
" his obedience, much beyond any thing
" that ever was, or ever cou'd be ſhewn
" in the ordinary way of mere moral
" duties."

Now let it be obſerved that theſe poſitive commands required mere external acts, to *leave his country*, and to *ſacrifice his ſon*: and the obedience to them conſiſted in doing what *Abraham* was commanded. How then does it appear that here was " as great virtue, or greater," in this obedience, than there is in obedience to moral duties? It proves indeed that *Abraham* believed in God, and hoped in him, and reſign'd himſelf up to him. But *Abraham* believed in God and hoped in him, and reſign'd up himſelf to him,

before these two great trials were offered to him; for neither of them would have caused belief, and hope, and resignation in him. The obedience to those positive commands proved that *Abraham had* these virtues, and the positive commands were public trials, manifestations, or proofs, that he had them. His leaving his country was not so properly virtue, as a declaration, or testimony, or proof of virtue, and consequently this instance is nothing to the purpose for which 'tis brought. The command, 'tis said, required a great degree of self-denial in him. True: And obedience to the positive command was a publick act of self-denial. True again: It was a *proof*, or *evidence* of virtue; but not an "improvement" upon it, or "a refinement "beyond" it; which was the point to be proved.

The positive command is always of such a certain act, *Leave thy country--Sacrifice thy son*, --- *Appear before* Pharaoh --- *Go to* Ninive, --- *Sell what thou hast*, &c. He that does these things, obeys these precepts. The command extends no farther, than the words expressly declare; and he that being commanded to *leave his father's house*, does leave it, pays a full and entire obedience to the command. The remarker tells us, there "may be as

"great

" great virtue" in this caſe " as in obe-
" dience to moral virtue." In order to prove this, he tells us of " *Abraham*'s " faith, and hope, and reſignation." Theſe virtues are moral virtues; and therefore if the excellence of *Abraham*'s obedience conſiſted in *theſe*, the remarker might have ſaid, that *Abraham*'s faith, and hope, and reſignation were of as " great virtue or greater" than his faith, and hope, and reſignation. But if this be not the point, than he is to prove that *Abraham*'s bare leaving his country is " greater virtue" than his faith, and hope, and reſignation. He proceeds.

" Sometimes poſitive precepts have been p. 21.
" given by God, and not complied with,
" or not without great reluctance, by men
" that would readily have practis'd *all* moral
" duties: which ſhews how much *greater*
" *a perfection* it may be in ſome caſes to
" comply with poſitive, than with moral
" commands." Here 'tis called " greater " perfection," which in the propoſition to be proved was called " greater virtue." Whatever has " Perfection," cannot have " greater " perfection, no more than whatever is ſtrait can have greater ſtraitneſs. But I ſuppoſe by " greater perfection," is meant making nearer approaches to perfection: and in this ſenſe the words are intelligible; but I think they will not anſwer the remarker's

marker's purpoſe. " The caſe of *Moſes* " being order'd to appear before *Pharaoh*, " and that of the prophet *Jonas*, and that " of the young man in the goſpel," will not prove that they had been " vaſtly more " perfect" by complying with the poſitive orders given, than they would have been, p. 21. had they been " good moral men." For had they been " good moral men", they would have been perfect: and therefore theſe inſtances prove, that they were not really " good moral men," but wanted much of being ſo, ſince they refuſed to comply with a divine order. They are far from being " good moral men", or from being *virtuous*, who can refuſe to obey the commands of God, or to truſt in him; and this appears to all, when they give ſuch publick evidence of their imperfections: whereas when Men obey any poſitive command, they ſhew by that how much fix'd in and reſolved upon virtue they really are: which is ſomething very different from obtaining perfection by obedience to poſitive orders more than by obedience to moral ones.

The young man in the goſpel refuſed to ſell what he had and to follow Chriſt. This evinces that he was not a " good moral" man; or that he did not conform himſelf to truth as he ought. His refuſal to obey our Saviour, was a publick evidence of his deficiency

deficiency in virtue; as his obedience would have been a proof of his virtue. His obedience then in this caſe would not have ſhew'd a much greater perfection than obedience to moral duties ſhews; but it would have ſhewn him to have been perfect in moral duties, whereas his diſobedience ſhew'd that he was not ſo.

The next rule laid down is---If the poſitive precept aims at ſome benefit of a higher kind, or more diffuſive, or more laſting; then " alſo obedience to ſuch poſitive pre- p. 21, 22.
" cept is preferable to moral. The com-
" mand given to the Apoſtles *to preach the*
" *goſpel to every creature*, was, I ſuppoſe,
" a poſitive command: The good intend-
" ed by it was the ſalvation of mankind
" hereafter, as well as their temporal feli-
" city here.---Therefore obedience to ſuch
" a precept, tho' only poſitive, was of greater
" value and excellency than moral virtues;
" low attainments, low works in com-
" pariſon."—This argument is doubly defective. *Firſt*, That which aims at the higheſt kind of benefit, or the moſt diffuſive and moſt laſting is of greateſt value. But the obedience to this poſitive precept aims at a higher kind of benefit, and more diffuſive, and more laſting, than moral duties do: Therefore it is of greater value than moral duties. Here the thing that ſtands in need

of

of a clear proof is, that obedience to the poſitive precept to *preach the goſpel* aims at a more diffuſive benefit, and more laſting, than the performance of moral duties does. And the reaſon why this muſt be proved is, becauſe obedience to virtue aims at the temporal felicity of all, and likewiſe aims at making men acceptable to God: and 'tis not eaſy to conceive what benefit more diffuſive, or more laſting can be aim'd at by men. *Secondly*, Tho' God, in his great goodneſs, contrived a benefit ſo diffuſive and laſting; yet it does not follow that the obedience to the command to preach the goſpel is of more value than obedience to moral duties. The virtue, or excellency of *obedience* to poſitive commands is exactly the ſame in all caſes, tho' the commands themſelves, or the effects of thoſe commands, may be very different. But without diſputing this point, I add, that the preaching of the goſpel was deſign'd *to teach men that denying* ungodlineſs *and* worldly luſts, *they ſhould live* ſoberly, righteouſly *and* godly *in this preſent world, looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify himſelf a peculiar people zealous of* good works. This very poſitive precept, of how diffuſive benefit

Titus ii. 12, 13, 14.

benefit ſoever, yet was a means to make men excel in moral virtue; 'twas deſign'd for that end; and every page of the New Teſtament tells us the obligation to moral goodneſs. Call moral virtues, "low attainments, low works," if you pleaſe; and add to that, to finiſh a conſiſtent character, a declamation againſt *carnal reaſon*; and when reaſon is diſcarded, you may talk about the "ſupernatural ſanctifying Graces" of ſacraments ſecurely: but virtue was never looked upon by Chriſt, or the Apoſtles, as "low attainments:" and if they had, the conſequence would have been ſomething very different from what this author imagines. On the contrary, they place, to their diſciples, the whole upon goodneſs and virtue; and they make every thing ſubſervient to that end: the goſpel was preach'd in order to bring men to *repentance*: the ſacraments were inſtituted as *means* to goodneſs: the Rewards of heaven are given to ſuch as continue in *well-doing*: and the puniſhment of hell is threatned to the workers of *iniquity*.

Since Chriſt then and his Apoſtles preſs upon chriſtians the neceſſity of well-doing, what is the difference betwixt *continuance in well doing* and *virtue?* betwixt *good works* and *moral goodneſs?* A man whoſe head is filled with diſtinctions, will ſay per-

haps, as the remarker does, that *moral goodneſs* is mere *pagan* virtue, which hath
p. 6, 7. the *nature of ſin*, whilſt the *good works* of the goſpel are *evangelical* virtues. But what is this "mean and low thing," this *pagan* virtue? Virtue is the conformity of our actions to truth, or the reaſons of things: *Pagan* virtue either is virtue, or 'tis not: if it has the *nature of ſin*, 'tis not virtue; and if it be a conformity to truth, it is virtue, and it cannot have the nature of ſin. If *pagan* virtue is the ſame as defective virtue, 'tis the ſame as that which is not virtue; or if it be real virtue, 'twill be impoſſible to diſtinguiſh very much betwixt virtue and virtue. But it is, ſays the remarker,
ibid. "defective in principle, and in direction, and "wanting the grace of God." If virtue or morality be "defective," in principle and in direction," I allow it to be imperfect, and to be evil: *i. e.* not virtue: but then virtue which is not virtue, is to me unintelligible. When he adds, that virtue or morality wants "the grace "of God" to make it acceptable;—I ſhall call upon him for a very expreſs text of ſcripture, which ſays that morality "wants the grace of God" to make it compleat or perfect. He that conforms his moral actions to the reaſons of things, directs them right, and wants nothing to make them exactly what they ought to be: and to call ſuch a conformity, "*Pagan*", in oppoſition to ſome other virtue which is not more

more exact, nor can be more exact, is only to blind people with ſcolaſtick jargon, and to confound them with words without meaning. But to return.

" What," ſays the Remarker, is feeding p. 22.
" the hungry, a few only at moſt, clothing
" the naked, relieving the widow or or-
" phan, or the like, if compared with bring-
" ing life, eternal life and happineſs to a
" whole world." I readily allow, that to " bring eternal life and happineſs to a " whole world", is much more excellent than to feed a few hungry people. But then, is obedience to this poſitive command of preaching the goſpel, a " bring-
" ing eternal life and happineſs to a whole
" world"? No; 'tis only declaring to men what *they* muſt *do* to be ſaved. One would think that this Author conſtantly took it for granted, that every one that preach'd the goſpel, or obey'd that poſitive precept, actually did or muſt ſave the whole world. The precept is, *go, teach all nations: i.e.* offer to mankind the terms of their acceptance with God. When the Apoſtles obey'd this, they declar'd to the world life and happineſs; and that thoſe who complied with the conditions, certainly would have it: but then the Apoſtles obedience conſiſted in the mere act of preaching the goſpel; and in doing that, I allow, they did in conſequence more good, than in feeding a few hungry people. But this

will only prove that one good action may be more beneficial in its consequences than another; or that one man may do more good than another; but not that obedience to a positive precept is more *virtue* than obedience to a moral one. But,

2. The comparison betwixt preaching the gospel and feeding the hungry is not rightly made; since feeding the hungry is made an Instance of moral duty; and preach-
p. 38. ing the gospel of positive duty: whereas "feeding the hungry" may not be an act of morality, no, not of his *pagan* virtue, since it may proceed, as this Author has observ'd, "from ostentation, or a worse "principle." But,

3. Supposing the best, *feeding the hungry*, is only an act by which I testify that I have virtue, but 'tis not virtue it self. Therefore,

4. Feeding the hungry may be only a positive command, and therefore not an instance of comparison betwixt positive duty and moral duty, but betwixt two positive duties, which is to be preferr'd.

5. How did the Apostles "*bring* eternal "happiness to a whole world?" they indeed preached that men should repent and turn to God, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, *i. e.* they preached up virtue, and their preaching was in order to promote virtue. So that after all, this positive

tive precept did not "carry more virtue" in it than morality does, but was design'd as a means to morality; and therefore was less worthy than the end, as I have already observ'd.

The third thing which the Remarker "promised to shew" was, that there may p. 23. be "as great or greater iniquity and impiety "in disobeying positive precepts, than in "disobeying moral ones." The evidences for this are all instances of people who have suffer'd for the breach of a positive command: As if any one now pleads for the non-observance of a positive command expressly given by God. The instances of *Adam*, and *Saul*, and of him that *gather'd sticks* on the sabbath-day, prove very clearly, that to break a positive command of God has been *penal*. But when tis said, that, in the case of institutions, "circumcision, and the observation p. 24. "of the sabbath were bound upon the *Jews* "by *stronger* penalties than many moral "duties;"—This Author ought to have produced *one* instance at least which would have been indisputable. For notwithstanding these "stronger penalties," he knows that circumcision was omitted for forty years together, and that God did not disapprove that omission; whereas there is no instance of God's not disapproving an immorality for a moment. And 'twas the same in other instances,

inſtances, if our Saviour be of authority; for thus he argues: *Have ye never read what* David *did, when he had* need, *and was an* hungred, *he and they that were with him? How he went into the houſe of God in the days of* Abiathar *the high prieſt, and did* eat the ſhew bread *which is* not lawful
Mark ii. 25, 26. to eat *but for* the prieſts; *and gave alſo to them that were with him?* St. *Matthew* relates this ſtill in ſtronger terms—*did eat the ſhew bread, which was* not lawful *for him to eat, neither for them which were with*
c. xii. 4. *him, but* only *for the* prieſts. *Or have ye not read in the law how that on the* ſabbath days *the* prieſts *in the temple* profane *the*
ver. 5. *ſabbath, and are* blameleſs.

But notwithſtanding this we are told,
p. 24. "that the *gathering ſticks* on the ſabbath-"day was death by divine appointment, "while *theft*, and ſeveral other breaches "of the *moral* law were more mildly dealt "with. So that if we may judge of a "crime by the penalties affix'd to it, we "have no reaſon at all to ſuppoſe that God "was leſs diſpleas'd with the breach of ſome "poſitive inſtitutions, than with the tranſ-"greſſions againſt the moral ones."

To make this argument good, there ſhould have been clear proof made, that God was determined to puniſh the tranſgreſſions of ſome moral duties *leſs* than the tranſgreſſions of poſitive

poſitive ones. The civil law of the *Jews* puniſh'd *theft* with a four-fold reſtitution; and in caſe the thief were worth nothing, then he was to be *ſold for his theft*. If this were the *whole* puniſhment which the unjuſt invader of his neighbour's property was ever to ſuffer, perhaps the inference would look more plauſible. But notwithſtanding thieves are puniſh'd here, yet chriſtians are taught that *thieves ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God*. The preſent puniſhment of an open immorality in ſociety does not preclude a future puniſhment before God: and tho' the breach of the peace be in ſome caſes valued at a certain price, that does not affect the penalty annex'd to the breach of the law of nature, which is cognizable before another judge. The violation of a mere poſitive inſtitution is to be puniſhed by inflicting the penalty annexed to ſuch an inſtitution: and the breach of a poſitive law, when it is no breach of a moral law, may be valued at a certain price here, and the man that ſuffers the penalty of it may be in danger of nothing future. But it is not ſo where the law of virtue is broken: for we are all to appear before God, and to give an account of our actions, and to receive a proper puniſhment, or reward. So that unleſs our Author is of opinion that either temporal preſent puniſhments are worſe

Exod. xxii. 1.—3.

or

or greater than the punishments of another life; or that there will be no future punishments for breaches of the moral law, this argument is inconclusive; and he too hastily

ibid. "presumes to draw this inference, that the "distinction of moral and positive will do "us little service as to the passing a judg- "ment upon the comparative value of di- "vine precepts."

These principles being supposed, every one of which is false, or at least not one of them is proved to be true, the Remarker

p. 27. proceeds to "return proper answers to "all objections." And here he principally has a view to those which occurr'd in *The answer to the remarks upon* Dr. *Clarke's* exposition of the catechism. The

First is, "positive institutions, when "compared with moral virtues or moral "duties, are treated as mere nothings, as "things not required at all. See how the "prophets have treated the whole *Mosaick* "dispensation, when compared with *doing* "*justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly*

c. i. 12, 13. "*with God*." The former of these Assertions is evident from *Isaiah*, *Who hath* required this *at your hands to* tread my courts. *Bring no more* vain oblations; incense *is an* abomination *to me: your new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with, 'tis iniquity,*

even

even the ſolemn meeting. The latter was a plain appeal to the prophet *Micah*, *where-withal ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with* burnt-offerings, *with* calves of a year old? *Will the Lord be pleas'd with* thouſands of rams—*He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to* walk humbly with thy God. This was one argument to prove, that moral virtue had ſome uſe, was of ſome benefit and efficacy without poſitive inſtitutions, and did not want theſe to render them acceptable to God: and this was oppoſed to our Author, who ſaid that "moral "virtues can be of *no* uſe" without the ſacrament. Micah vi. 6, 7, 8.

The reply is, "*walking humbly with God*, p. 28. "is walking in all the ſtatutes and ordinances "of the Lord blameleſs. Obeying the "poſitive commands of God, is *walking* "*humbly* before him." I anſwer,

That tho' *walking humbly with God*, may, when put abſolutely, ſignify, obeying his *poſitive* commands as well as *moral* ones, yet in the prophet *Micah* it cannot ſignify that. He oppoſes, *walking humbly with God*, to ſacrificing; and declares what is *good*, in contradiſtinction to the moſt coſtly, or moſt valued offerings that could be given.

Beſides; had walking humbly with God neceſſarily included the poſitive commands of God, (as our Author ſuppoſes) the prophet could not have ſaid, *ſhall I give* my firſt-born *for my tranſgreſſion*, the fruit of my body *for the ſin of my ſoul*. For this was no part of a poſitive inſtitution, and therefore could not be urged as "part of obedience", or as a thing contain'd in the enſuing moral precept, of *walking humbly with God*. The truth is, when a poſitive command was given, *e.g.* to ſacrifice a lamb, or a goat, or whatever it was, for any offence; he that brought the ſacrifice to the altar, did as he was commanded, and all that he was commanded by the poſitive inſtitution; provided he obſerv'd the rules which were enjoin'd to him, *viz.* to lay his hand on the head of the ſacrifice, to let the prieſt have the proper parts of it, *&c.* In this caſe there was no "*partial* obedience," but *entire* obedience, a real and true performance of every thing commanded in the poſitive precept. If the queſtion be, why then do the prophets ſpeak in ſo contemptuous a manner about ſacrifices? the anſwer is, That God deſign'd and inſtituted them as proper memento's of what ſinners deſerved: that by daily ſacrificing, they ſhould conſtantly be put in mind of virtue, and the obligations to it; that therefore when they truſted to ſacrifices, as if

theſe things were required on their *own* accounts, and neglected virtue which was the principle thing intended, they miſtook the means for the end; and this made the prophets ſpeak in ſo contemptuous a manner about them. But

" Sacrifices, ſays the Remarker, were p. 28.
" *part* only of what God required, and re-
" duced to an *external part*, ſeparate from
" that true and ſincere piety which ought
" to have gone along with them:" and this was the reaſon why " God ſlighted ſacrifices." That they were a " part of obedience" is true: and that true piety ſhould likewiſe have gone along with them, is true. But then the reaſon why ſacrifices were ſlighted, was not that they were " a part only of what " God required," but becauſe they were the deſigned *means* to piety, and were not uſed as ſuch. The performance of one part of duty, which is the performance of the *whole* poſitive command, would be " very great virtue" upon the principles of the Remarker, and therefore not to be contemn'd. But the performance of that which was deſigned as a means to virtue, and was of no value otherwiſe, is really contemptible, when the end propoſed is not regarded.

But beſides this; the thing for which the prophets were appealed to by me, was to ſhew that " moral virtues did not want a poſitive " inſtitution to make them acceptable to

" God." Now this ſcene is ſhifted off, and in anſwer we are told, that the *Jewiſh*
p. 29. " performances were *outward* and *hypo-*
" *critical*, and at beſt, partial obedience." What if they were? how does this prove that there " may be greater excellency " and more real virtue in obeying poſitive " precepts, than in any moral virtue."—Admitting, that God ſlights the outward and hypocritical ſacrifices of the *Jews*, and ſets a great value upon morality. Therefore what? Therefore there is more real virtue in ſacrifices than in morality,—Is this an argument that will ſatisfy any perſon, that wanted
p. 1. ſatisfaction? or is this the way to " guard" your notions " againſt all exceptions?"

'Twas objected further againſt this poſition of the Remarker,—" That there may be " greater excellency and more real virtue " in obeying poſitive precepts, than in any " moral virtue,"—that our Saviour had different notions, ſince he approved that maxim, *I will* have *mercy and not ſacrifice*, or, rather *than ſacrifice*. Here inſtead of anſwering the objection, an artificial duſt is rais'd, and the occaſion of our Saviour's uſing it is told, but not a word of reply to the maxim it ſelf. This maxim was laid down by *Hoſea*, and it was approved by our Saviour, nay, brought by him as evidence againſt thoſe who pleaded for as great virtue in obeying
Matt. xii. poſitive precepts, as moral ones. And by
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it he justifies *David* for eating the shew-bread, which by a positive precept it was not lawful for him to eat. Here a moral virtue is preferr'd to a positive institution: 'tis *opposed* to it, and therefore cannot be contain'd *in* it as a part of the same duty. And as no answer is made, I here lay it before our Author, as what requires a clear one, by which he may have the pleasure of confuting me, and at the same time, of confuting our blessed Lord himself.

Mercy is a moral virtue; and it may be manifested numberless ways, either by preaching the gospel in order to convert sinners, or by shewing kindness to an enemy in our power, or by forgiving a man whom you might lawfully hurt, or by many other methods. All these are instances of a moral virtue. Sacrifice is a positive institution, and therefore to be obey'd, because prescribed. When therefore mercy, or a moral duty, and sacrifice, or a positive duty, are compar'd, and the moral is expressly preferr'd, 'tis easy to see whether there is greater iniquity in disobeying positive or moral precepts.

'Tis not my design to examine the declamation that follows, that however wicked the "*Jews* were otherwise, yet "they were never impudent enough to leave "off their sacrifices, and solemn assemb-"lies." 'Tis enough to say, to all this charge

p. 31.

charge of "compendious wickedneſs, and "defiance to the God of heaven," that "the *Jews* were "*impudent enough*" to leave off circumciſion for almoſt forty years together: *David* was "*impudent enough*" *to eat of the ſhewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat:* and the prieſts were "*impudent* enough" *in the temple to profane the ſabbath, and yet were blameleſs.* The uſe of this ſort of low declamatory harangues can only be of ſervice where arguments are wanting, and where the paſſions are to be moved, whilſt the judgment remains untouch'd.

Matt. xii. 4, 5.

Twas urged further by me, "*The pro-*"*phets tell us* -- To what purpoſe is the multitude of your *ſacrifices* unto me? — *I delight not in the blood of bullocks.— When ye come to appear before me, who hath* required this at your hands, *to tread my courts? How eaſy wou'd it have been to have replied to* Iſaiah, *or to our* Saviour, *upon this Author's principle, that obedience to a* "poſitive inſtitution is at "once an exerciſe of obedience to the "law, and of faith, of worſhip, and re-"pentance?" That therefore "obedience "to poſitive inſtitutions is a higher act of "love to God than any moral virtue."

The Anſwer is — "Yes certainly, and p. 33. "ſo it is, when the obedience is ſincere

"and

" and duly circumſtantiated." And as to p. 33.
that part of the objection which conſiſts in God's declaring himſelf againſt ſacrifices, the anſwer is, that elſewhere ſacrifices " are " ſtiled *a ſweet odour unto the Lord.*"

The force of my objection lies in this, That notwithſtanding poſitive inſtitutions were preſcribed by God; yet when they, and moral duties, are compared together, moral duties are always preferr'd. From this, *Two* things are concluded in direct contradiction to the remarker, 1*ſt*. That therefore poſitive duties were not deſign'd to " ſupply where moral duties fell ſhort," nor were they " additional improvements " upon virtuous practices." And 2*dly*, That moral virtues had an " efficacy towards " procuring ſalvation, without being im- " proved and render'd acceptable by po- " ſitive performances." The real anſwer ſhould have been, that notwithſtanding this preference of moral virtues to poſitive inſtitutions, yet ſtill ſacrifices, or poſitive inſtitutions, " were of more immediate ef- " ficacy to unite us to God than moral " virtues." Inſtead of this I am told what every child knows, that ſacrifices are acceptable, or are *a ſweet odour to God.* True: But where are they ſaid to be " additional improvements upon virtuous " practices?" Or where doth God ever

ſay

ſay that he *hates moral virtue* and *loves ſacrifice?* or that he will have ſacrifice rather than mercy? Every poſitive inſtitution is plainly deſign'd as a means to virtue: and upon this principle alone can *natural*, and the poſitive parts of inſtituted, religion be made conſiſtent with God's moral character, and with themſelves. And if ſacrifices are conſidered in this view, even we may ſee wiſdom and goodneſs in the inſtitution, which otherwiſe perhaps it may be harder than is at firſt imagined to conceive, why God ſhould appoint the ſlaying of ſo many beaſts, and the offering up of ſo much blood at his altars. *Every beaſt of the foreſt is mine, and the cattel upon a thouſand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountain, and the wild beaſts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulneſs thereof. Will I eat the fleſh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thankſgiving, and pay thy vows unto the moſt high!* Why ſhou'd a ſpiritual being not be ſatisfied with a worſhip in ſpirit and in truth? And why was not he pleaſed with a pure ſpiritual ſervice 4000 years ago as well as now? There will be no difficulty in this matter, ſuppoſing poſitive inſtitutions to be means

Pſal. 50. 9—14.

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to virtue: But if they are conſidered as "improvements" upon virtue, as "exerciſes of obedience to the law, and of "faith, of worſhip, and of repentance," 'tis unconceivable that the prophets ſhou'd treat them as they have, as if ſuch neceſſary things had never been inſtituted at all, or are not neceſſary to be continued ſtill.

But, ſays the remarker, "Any *moral* p. 34. "performances, if outward only and hypocritical — would have been as worthleſs as any thing the prophet ſpeaks of." Tell me, Sir, what a "*moral*," *i. e.* a virtuous, "performance" is, which is "outward only and hypocritical," and in what this moral performance differs from an *immoral* one; and ſhew me at the ſame time how or where I have pleaded for the virtue of immoralities. This artificial confuſion of all language, this playing upon the word, *moral*, and uſing it ſometimes for, *virtue*, and ſometimes for, *vice*; this ſhuffling and quibling — is this to free a doctrine from exception, or to give your friends or adverſaries ſatisfaction? Name an inſtance of *morality* that is *worthleſs*, and you ſay ſomething to the point. But to name an inſtance of what is acknowledged to be "vanity" or "oſtentation," or to proceed from "a worſe "principle," and to call this *Morality*, and

to oppoſe this to poſitive inſtitutions, is not to ſhew the comparative value and excellency of poſitive duties above *moral* duties, but above *immoralities*.

However, I am told "a diſtinction" which will "anſwer every difficulty I have "raiſed." It is, that I am to "diſtinguiſh "between outward acts and poſitive duties; "and between ſlighting ſome poſitive du-
p. 34. "ties, and ſlighting them *as ſuch*."

Poſitive laws, this Author owns, are not
p. 8. founded "in the fixed nature or reaſon of "things," but are conſidered only as "pre-"ſcribed," and as depending on God's "good pleaſure either to remove or to "continue them." Poſitive Duties then are the things preſcribed by poſitive Laws. Poſitive duties therefore depending upon the will of the preſcriber, and being changeable, they muſt all conſiſt of *outward* acts. Accordingly the *Jewiſh* law, (I except the moral part, which is not properly poſitive;) all of it conſiſted in *outward acts*, and he that complied with them, complied with the poſitive duties. He that did not plough with an ox and an aſs, He that did not ſow his land with different ſeeds, or make his cloaths of linnen and woollen, obey'd thoſe laws which commanded him not to do ſo. If God intended by theſe outward acts to guard the *Jews* from the

cuſtoms of the *Zabij*, or from *Idolatry*, or had any further views in his poſitive laws which the *Jews* were acquainted with; then the end to which theſe laws were the means was likewiſe to be obſerv'd; and to obſerve the outward act without the intended end, was not to obſerve the Law, but to divide it. Now in theſe caſes poſitive duties, can never be "additional improvements upon virtuous "practices"; nor can they "unite us to "God by a more immediate efficacy than "morality", but they are deſigned to lead us to morality and virtue, which are the things which unite us to God. To diſtinguiſh therefore betwixt *outward acts* and *poſitive duties*, will not help us to remove the difficulty I objected, unleſs under the term, *poſitive* duties, you conceive *moral* duties too, *i. e.* the things to which the poſitive duties are deſigned as means. And if you do include them, this is confounding what ought to be carefully diſtinguiſh'd; and this has involved our author in ſo much darkneſs, and has made this diſcourſe ſo intricate and confuſed.

I think it needleſs to ſay any more upon this ſubject, or to review what I ſaid upon other Texts. I muſt only obſerve that when I ſaid, St. *James* places *pure religion*

upon *moral* actions, the anſwer is, that
" St. *James* had no contemptible opinion
p. 35. " of poſitive ordinances." Juſt as if I had ever pleaded againſt obedience to them, or had them in contempt. The remarker knew that I had pleaded for obedience to them: He knew that there was a paragraph, wherein I ſhewed that I had no contempt of them, unleſs that be deem'd a contempt, not to prefer them to morality and virtue. I will place what I ſaid once more before the reader's eyes, leſt he ſhould imagine that I had denied obedience to all, or any, poſitive ordinances; and that I may (if poſſible) guard againſt ſuch iniquous inſinuations as this diſcourſe of the *efficacy of the ſacraments* is full of. " I
Anſwer, p. 81, 82. " would not by this, no more than Dr.
" *Clarke* would, be thought to leſſen or
" ſlight the poſitive inſtitutions of our
" Lord, or to repreſent them as uſeleſs, or
" unneceſſary. No: they are to be con-
" ſidered as what they are, and not as
" what they are not: Uſeful in their
" places, and naturally conducive to the
" ends for which they were appointed by
" our Saviour, but not as " chriſtian
" perfection", when there is not one ſuch
" thought appears in the whole New Teſta-
" ment, nor in the catechiſm which Dr.
" *Clarke* took upon him to expound."

When

When ſuch a declaration is made expreſs, one muſt leave it to a man's own conſcience, whether he will proceed in repreſenting his adverſary, as if he were deſpiſing all inſtitutions. Sure I am that ſuch a conduct cannot proceed from *moral virtue*; and if 'tis to be juſtified at all, it muſt be from unknown "additional *im-*
"*provements* upon virtuous practices."

In the laſt place, I ſhall review what was urged in behalf of morality from the nature and reaſon of the thing. 'Twas urged from Arch-Biſhop *Tillotſon*, that *natural and moral duties are approved of God for themſelves, and on their own account, and for their* own ſake, *upon account of their own natural and intrinſical goodneſs: but the ritual and inſtrumental parts of religion are only pleaſing to God in order to theſe, and ſo far as they tend to beget and promote them in us.* In anſwer to this plea, the remarker obſerves,

1. "That the intrinſical goodneſs here P. 38.
"ſpoken of means *natural* goodneſs
"only, or beneficial tendency, ſuch as
"appears in alms-giving, liberality, *&c.*
"and which is the ſame, tho' the thing
"be done out of vanity, oſtentation, or
"other worſe principle: it follows the
"outward act. But our queſtion is
"about

" about moral goodneſs, which lies in " the obedience to the divine law, and " is equally ſeen in an *indifferent* matter, " as in a thing which is naturally and " materially of beneficial tendency."

The only anſwer that this deſerves is, That the Arch-Biſhop might be ſuppoſed to have underſtood his own meaning; and as he ſpoke of duties that had an *intrinſic Goodneſs*, and were approved by God on *their own* account, and for *their own* ſake, he ought not to be interpreted, as if he ſpoke of things which had *not intrinſic* goodneſs, but only a beneficial tendency, following the outward act. Does God approve any one thing that " proceeds from vanity, or oſtentation, or a " worſe principle?" *Tillotſon* had too much ſenſe to ſay ſo: he cou'd not poſſibly have ſaid, nor can any man that underſtands the terms ſay, that moral duties are approved by God on *their own* account when they are done upon " *bad principles*," *i. e.* when they are *immoral*, and in conſequence hated and deteſted by God. The Remarker proceeds to obſerve,

p. 38. 2. " That obedience to a poſitive Law, " as preaching the goſpel, for inſtance, " may be of more beneficial influence, " and may therefore have more *intrinſical* " goodneſs in it than moral duties." *Go and*

and teach all nations is certainly a poſitive precept; and ſuppoſing that men will hear, it may be of very "beneficial in-"fluence." But how has obedience to this precept more "intrinſical goodneſs in "it" than gratitude, juſtice, or moral duties? The intrinſick goodneſs of any moral act conſiſts in its exact conformity to truth, not in its "beneficial influence:" for That, if it muſt have a name given it, is its *extrinſic* goodneſs. Obedience to a poſitive law is right, and acceptable unto God who commands it: and therefore obedience to the command to preach the Goſpel is right, and acceptable to God. The only queſtion here is, whether preaching the goſpel be acceptable to God *on its own account, for its own ſake, upon account of its own natural and intrinſic goodneſs*; or whether it is pleaſing to him as it *tends to beget and promote virtue in us*. 'Tis affirmed to be a *poſitive* law by this author in this place: and his definition of a *poſitive law*, is, that 'tis "conſidered "only as *preſcribed*, and as depending p. 8. "upon God's good pleaſure either to "remove or to continue it." Now if the mere preaching the Goſpel be not *for its own ſake*, but for other ends, namely, to *beget and promote virtue* amongſt mankind, then this is no more than an *inſtrumental*

part

part of religion, and cannot be ſo excellent as moral virtue. If a parrot were taught theſe words, *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, and were to fly about, and utter them -- This would not be acceptable to God, more than his ſaying any other words. Were a man to ſay the ſame words, or to go about and preach that doctrine, who had no deſign to beget or to promote virtue in mankind, neither would this be more pleaſing to God, than when a parrot ſpoke them: Laſtly, were any man to believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, without this belief's producing in him virtue, -- This would not make him at all acceptable unto God. Preaching therefore the goſpel, and believing it when it is preached, is only acceptable as it produces the effect of virtue amongſt mankind, and conſequently is not ſo excellent as virtue. This ſhews too the weakneſs of the aſſertion, that "preaching "the Goſpel has a *more beneficial influence* "than moral duties": ſince preaching the goſpel is deſigned to produce moral virtues; which when they are produced muſt have all the influence which the other could only aim at. The Remarker has a

P. 39. 3*d* Obſervation, which is this; "'Tis "entirely begging the queſtion, to ſay that "all poſitive duties are *inſtrumental* parts "only of religion: They may be as direct

"religion,

" religion, or even more direct religion, " than any moral performances."

The meaning, I think, of *Religion* is, the performance of any action from a ſenſe of the being of God, and with a view of making our ſelves acceptable to him. No doubt poſitive duties, or any commands of God, demand obedience to them; and may be called, religious duties. But the queſtion is, which is moſt pleaſing to God; that which is the means to virtue (as all poſitive duties are) or virtue it ſelf, ſince the " end is always " nobler than the means." To ſay that " poſitive duties are *more* direct *religion* " than any moral performances," is either an abſurdity in terms, or elſe 'tis an impertinent compariſon. The exerciſe of juſtice, or gratitude from a ſenſe of the being of God is ſtrictly religion; and obedience to any poſitive command of God can be no *more* religion than this is: 'Tis therefore an abſurdity to talk of *more direct religion* in poſitive duties than in moral performances, if you conceive the moral performances done from a ſenſe of God; and if you conceive the moral performances done out of any other end, 'tis as impertinent as ſaying that a religious duty is more religion than that which is not religion at all. p. 39.

But allowing that positive duties are direct religion, how is this a confutation of what Arch-Bishop *Tillotson* said? Positive duties, which are designed to *beget or promote virtue in us* are religious duties: the Sacraments, *e. g.* are religious duties, and are designed to beget or promote virtue in us, therefore they are not pleasing on their *own* accounts, but as they produce their ends. Let these positive duties be religion, or obedience to them an act of religion; how does this refute the argument produced to shew the superior excellence of virtue to any positive institution? Why! it seems, positive duties are Religion. Yes; Religion of the *means*, as 'tis call'd, and that is always less "noble "than the end." So that we are got no further than we were before; nor is it proved that positive duties are "additional "improvements upon virtuous practices:" nor that they have "a more immediate "efficacy to unite us to God than virtue," which was the point undertaken by the remarker to be proved.

I urged in the Answer to the remarks further, *That moral virtues are the exact imitation of God, and therefore* need no aid to "relieve" *them, nor any thing to* "improve" them. *They are in themselves acceptable to God, and a holy, good,*

and juſt being cannot but approve the man that is governed by them. They want nothing to make them "acceptable." Anſwer, p. 72. The reply to this is very ſtrange, and which ſhews that the remarker would turn the reader's eyes another way. Moral virtues were ſaid to be *the* imitation *of God.* The anſwer is, "ſomething is previous to the imitating God, and more "acceptable to him, and that is obeying "him." p. 42. Not one word was ſuggeſted either againſt, or about, *obeying* God, but an argument was urged to ſhew that moral virtues being an exact imitation of God, *they* ſtand in no need of any thing to "*improve*" them, or to make them "acceptable" to God. The buſineſs of the remarker was to prove, that poſitive duties are an "improvement" upon virtue, and are the things which make thoſe moral duties "acceptable," which would not be "acceptable" without them. The anſwer is, That we ought to *obey* God. Was ever a point of this conſequence thus handled before?

As theſe general principles have been laid down with a particular view to the two ſacraments, and chiefly to that of the Lord's Supper, 'tis time to proceed to what is ſuggeſted upon thoſe points.

The remarker grants " that the two " chriſtian ſacraments really are in ſome " ſenſe *means* to moral, to chriſtian virtue:" And then he adds " both naturally and
p. 45, 46. " ſupernaturally." The " natural means" he allows to be " very juſtly" explained
Clarke's Expoſit. p. 304. by Dr. *Clarke:* " *That by doing this con-* " *ſtantly and evidently in remembrance of* " *Chriſt, and ſhewing forth the Lord's* " *death till he come, we renew and con-* " *firm continually our own part in the* " *Chriſtian covenant: We ſtrengthen our* " *faith, by meditating upon the object* " *and upon the grounds and motives of* " *it: we increaſe our hope by commemo-* " *rating thankfully the love of God in* " *Chriſt, and exhibiting and applying to* " *our ſelves the memorials of divine good-* " *neſs, and compaſſion towards ſinners:* " *we inlarge and ſtrengthen, by this com-* " *munion of Chriſtians, that ſacred bond* " *of univerſal love, charity, and good-will,* " *which is the end of the commandment.*"

P. 47. But beſides this natural effect, the remarker ſay, " there is alſo a *ſupernatural* virtue and " *efficacy* derived from above upon the wor- " thy receiver. — The Spirit of God works " *inviſibly* upon the worthy receivers to " aſſiſt, ſtrengthen, and confirm them in " all goodneſs" In the remarks, 'twas
Remark, p. 83. ſaid, " there is a ſalutary *life-giving* virtue " annex'd

" annex'd to the Sacrament." As I did not underſtand this language, like to which I remembred nothing in Scripture, I ask'd, What are theſe graces which are derived to every worthy receiver? And I added, that the remarker *ſeemed to me, to ſpeak as if to this Sacrament were annexed* certain particular effects, *which were produced, not as religious and moral effects are produced in a natural, ordinary, and intelligible manner, but in a myſterious unintelligible way, of which the Scriptures are entirely ſilent.* The only ſatisfaction I receive, is contained in theſe words, " I " wiſh this gentleman would well con- p. 49.
" ſider, whether it be not *prophaneneſs* thus " to ridicule the doctrine of the opera- " tions of the Spirit." If any thing appears like *prophaneneſs* or *ridicule* in thoſe words of mine, I here openly retract and diſclaim them. But as they appear to me in another light, and I know in my own heart, that I had no profane views or thoughts then, nor have now in deſiring to know upon what texts of ſcripture this doctrine is founded, I ſhall preſently call upon this author again to name a text of ſcripture, in which is contained a promiſe of " ſupernatural ſanctifying " graces going along with the worthy re- p. 48.
" ception of the Holy communion." And when

when I ask for this again, do not refer me to *Voſſius*, or Dr. *Claget*, much leſs to his abridger; but refer me to an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt's, and ſhew me in what part of the New Teſtament I may find it. I have ſeen and read volumes upon the doctrine of the Trinity, where the grand point propoſed has been to prove, that "each "divine perſon is an individual intelligent "agent; but as ſubſiſting in one undivided "ſubſtance, they are all together but one "undivided intelligent agent:" whereas 'tis well known that not one ſentence, not one word, not one letter of any ſuch doctrine is ſo much as obſcurely hinted at in the New Teſtament; nor can ever be deduced by conſequence from any thing therein: and that alone is enough to make a man ſuſpicious of doctrines which he does not remember there. Much more will his ſuſpicions be encreas'd, when either no text is produced, or a very obſcure one is made the foundation of an important doctrine; and inſtead of a clear paſſage from the New Teſtament, a ſentence out of the publick forms of our church is cited, and an impertinent digreſſion is made about a Book of Dr. *Nicholls*, which tells us how we differ
P. 47. from the *Remonſtrants* in *Holland*. And This truly is the *Satisfaction* I am to have!

The

The Euchariſt is the ſubject of the preſent debate, and "ſupernatural ſanctifying graces, you tell us, go along with "the worthy reception of it." I asked before, where in the new Teſtament is the *promiſe* of theſe "*graces* that go along "with the worthy reception of the com-"munion" to be found? The Anſwer given is this: "The operation of the Spirit "*in* it and *by* it may be ſtrongly inferr'd "from the analogy there is between the "two Sacraments; and from parity of "reaſon; and from what I ſhall hereafter "prove under my third particular; and from "the expreſs words of the Apoſtle, *By* "*one ſpirit we are all baptized into one* "*body, and have been all made to drink* "*into one ſpirit.*" P. 48. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

The reaſon why I ſaid *I ſhall preſently ask again* for a Text of Scripture, which contains a promiſe of theſe "ſupernatural "ſanctifying graces going along with the "worthy reception of the ſacrament," will now appear. "The operation of the "ſpirit *in* the euchariſt and *by* it;" ſays the Remarker. There is not one word of this ſort of language, that I remember, in the ſcripture; and therefore I now call for a Text, that proves "an opera-"tion of the ſpirit *in* and *by* "the eu-"chariſt. The remarker ſeems ſenſible of

of this, when he ſays, "it may be ſtrongly "*inferred* from the analogy between the "two ſacraments." Here again, I will not ask for ſcripture proof, but for *any* proof; and the reaſon is, that which is, or may be, promiſed to one ſacrament, and is not promiſed to the other in fact, can't be *proved* to be promiſed to that to which it is not promiſed. Nor is it to be infer'd "from parity of reaſon:" for 'tis no conſequence that if God promiſes any thing to one thing; he is obliged to promiſe it to another; ſince what accrues by promiſe is matter of favour, and not of right. As to what is to come under the *third* particular, will be there conſidered; only I muſt remark, that under *that* head he takes for granted, that he has proved *here*, what he promiſes here to prove there. There remains then only this one Text, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. to anſwer my demand: Now in this Text, there is not one word of "ſuper-"natural ſanctifying graces;" not one word of any "promiſe" at all; not one word of either "worthy" or unworthy "receivers;" and laſtly ſuppoſing it relates to the "euchariſt" it ſelf, yet it has nothing to do with *Graces*. And is this a Text to build ſo important a doctrine upon? There is indeed mention made of *ſpirit*, and,

and, mention is made too of *drinking*: But this will not come up to the point. The Apoſtle is proving that the whole complex of chriſtians make up one myſtical, or figurative, body, juſt as the many parts of our ſelves all conſpire in making up one natural body. *For as the* body *is* one, *and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, ſo alſo is Chriſt.* And then immediately follows the Text in debate, *For by one ſpirit we have been baptized into* one body, *whether we be* Jews *or* Gentiles, *whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink* into one ſpirit. Here then,

1. The apoſtle ſpeaks of what *had been done*, and conſequently here is no promiſe of any thing to be done in our times.

2. He is ſpeaking of the *unity* that ought to be amongſt all, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the means by which they were *united*: And therefore to put a ſenſe upon the words, (ſuppoſing them capable of it,) which is foreign to the deſign of the writer, is perverting his meaning.

3. *To drink* into *one ſpirit*, is not the ſame as to *drink* of *the ſpirit*: but it ſignifies, we have drank ſo as to become members of that ſpiritual body, which

has been animated by that one ſpirit. What is this to "ſupernatural ſanctifying "graces" promiſed to the receivers of the Sacrament? We *have been* made to *drink into* one ſpirit, is nothing but by the ſacramental actions to ſhew our ſelves members of that figurative body which is Chriſt; That we are admitted into that religious ſociety, the truth of whoſe doctrines has been confirmed by the ſpirit. 'Tis a form of expreſſion frequently enough uſed elſewhere; and never ſignifies any effects derived from that, or him, *into* whom we are ſaid to be baptized, or made to drink. We are baptized, εἰς, *into*, one body; not that theſe words imply that we receive any thing from that *body*, but we are by baptiſm admitted *into* that body. The *Jews* were all baptized, εἰς, *into*, *Moſes* 1 Cor. x. 2. *i. e.* by baptiſm (whatever baptiſm that is) they were admitted into that ſociety whereof *Moſes* was the chief, or into that religion which *Moſes* brought from God. So to be *made to drink*, or to drink *into* one ſpirit, is by that rite to declare that we are of thoſe who have received the ſpirit, or who have ſpiritual gifts amongſt them, in confirmation of the truth of their doctrines. But how this concerns worthy receivers of the communion, farther than to ſhew that they

are

are members of Christ's mystical body, is still to be proved.

The *second* step our Author takes is to shew, "that the right and worthy use of "the sacraments has not barely the na- "ture of means to an end, *viz.* to moral "virtue, but is virtue direct; is part of "our moral and christian holiness, piety, "and perfection." This position seem'd to want a little softning, and therefore 'tis instantly added — "I mean by this, "that it is as much a part of virtue, as "the performance of any moral duties "is." This again wanted some explica- tion, and therefore he adds, — "as much "as feeding the hungry, cloathing the "naked, *&c.* is virtue." So that at last after all this mumbling the thistle, the wor- thy use of the sacraments is *as much* "virtue direct" as feeding the hungry is virtue direct. 'Tis very strange that I should have occasion to be always putting this writer in mind of what he undertook to prove, that the sacraments are "addi- "tional improvements upon virtuous "practices." Supposing therefore he could prove that the right use of the sacrament was "virtue direct," yet virtue direct is not an "additional improvement" upon virtue. Again, He had said, and that was what I had denied, that the sacraments

p. 52.

ibid.

ibid.

" ſupply where moral virtues fall ſhort, they " relieve where the other cannot, they " finiſh what the other but begins." Allowing now the ſacraments to be " virtue," we ſtill are where we were; for direct " virtue" cannot " ſupply" where direct virtue " falls ſhort," nor " finiſh" where it " begins."

But tho' the doctrine in the former book be thus artfully dropp'd, and the " improve- " ment upon virtue" is now ſunk into bare " virtue," yet even this is to be examined a little in order to clear up this ſubject which has been ſo dextrouſly obſcur'd. " The worthy receiving the chriſtian ſa- " craments is *virtue* in the ſame ſenſe as
P. 52. " any good moral action is," it is the " exercise of many and great virtues." In the
P. 53. following page he tells us, " It is an " exerciſe of the love of God," 'tis " an " an act of worſhip," 'tis " an exerciſe of " faith, hope, charity, all in one;" 'tis " an exerciſe of humility." This repreſentation of the ſacrament is, firſt, nothing to the purpoſe. For the remarker was to prove, as I muſt ſtill obſerve, not that the ſacrament was " direct virtue," but that it was more than virtue, " a refine- " ment beyond" it. But *2dly*, and what is principally here to be obſerv'd; this repreſentation of worthy receiving the ſacrament

crament is not at all a right one, unleſs it be ſaid to be right to affirm, that whatever act of virtue can poſſibly be exerted upon any certain occaſion, that is neceſſarily and eſſentially requiſite to be exerted on ſuch occaſion. The ſcripture commands us to *eat of that bread, and drink of that wine, in remembrance of Chriſt.* This action may be made the occaſion of exerciſing of many virtues; and yet the inſtitution, or command, cannot be ſaid to *require* the exerciſe of thoſe extrinſic virtues. Suppoſe a command were given, that men ſhould conſider any particular part of the creation, the lillies of the field, the trees, the graſs, or any other body. This might be the occaſion of raiſing in my mind a thouſand different good reflections; and pious meditations might be made upon any of theſe ſubjects; yet no one thence would ſay that the looking upon, or conſidering a ſpire of graſs was virtue, or a complication of many virtues in one. The *worthy* receiving the ſacrament, is receiving it according to the ends appointed, and for which the inſtitution was made: If other uſes are made of it than what were declared by the inſtitutor, thoſe are not neceſſary to the inſtitution, and are not eſſential parts of worthy receiving. So

that

that 'tis not enough to ſay, that by worthy receiving the communion men *may exerciſe* many virtues, but the queſtion is, are they *required* to exerciſe them? If they are *required*, I ſhall deſire the text of ſcripture that *requires* them: if they are not required, they are not neceſſary to worthy receiving the communion. In ſhort, as many virtues as in the remarker's notion are exerciſed in the worthy receiving the ſacrament, are exerciſed, I ſay, in Alms-giving: 'Tis an "act of love of "God," ſhewn in relieving his creatures: it is an "act of worſhip;" ſince by it we acknowledge the providence of God; 'tis an "act of faith, hope, and charity all in "one, and a lively expreſſion of all three "together." 'Tis an "exerciſe of hu-"mility," ſuch as the pride of ſome is a ſtranger too: 'Tis "thankfulneſs and re-"verence towards God:" and 'tis in ſhort an exerciſe of what virtue the alms-giver *pleaſes to make it*. And yet no man I ſuppoſe would think, that He that gives away an alms to a poor man, is *obliged* to exerciſe *all* theſe in order to give alms *worthily*. In poſitive duties all that is neceſſary is, to obſerve the command, and to obſerve the end propoſed; and He that does that obſerves it worthily.

When

When *thus* the worthy uſe of the ſacrament had been proved to be *virtue*, our Author proceeds in this remarkable manner. "This devout exerciſe of humility, and thankfulneſs, and profound "reverence towards God the father, ſon, "and holy ghoſt, is a degree of virtue "much beyond what commonly goes under the name of moral virtue, and is "ſo far from being merely a ſtep to it, "that 'tis an *improvement* upon it, and a "*refinement* beyond it. But this is no "more than virtue ſtill; and, ſo is a condition only." I know not what it is that the remarker ſuppoſes "*commonly* to "go under the name of moral virtue;" nor what ideas this author has to thoſe words; or if he has any determined ones at all. This exerciſe, ſays he, of *three* virtues, humility, thankfulneſs, and reverence to God, (he had before proved it to be the exerciſe of *twice three* virtues) is "*a* degree of virtue much beyond what "commonly goes under the name of moral "virtue:" and *is* ſo far from being.— What is *ſo far from being?* Why; the exerciſe of three (or ſix) moral virtues is ſo far from being a ſtep to *it*, *i. e.* to moral virtue, that the exerciſe of three (or ſix) moral virtues "is an improvement "upon *it*"—*i. e.* upon moral virtue, "and "a p. 54.

" a refinement beyond *it*," *i. e.* beyond moral virtue." But this [improvement upon and refinement beyond moral virtue] " is " no more than virtue ſtill." Surely this wants a little explication to make it ſatisfactory, or even intelligible: at leaſt it does to me.

The queſtion that was to be diſcuſſed by this author was, Were the ſacraments inſtituted by God as *means* to virtue, or not? Did it appear any ways from the inſtitution that they were intended as *means?* what ſignifies it to the preſent point, to enquire whether obedience to God be virtue, when the queſtion is, whether God did inſtitute the ſacraments as *means* to, or " as im- " provements upon, and refinements be- " yond virtue?" The natural reſolution of this is to recur to the New Teſtament, and to name the Text or the ſeveral Texts, where God has made, or declared, the ſacraments to be ſuch " refinements beyond" virtue. For it being a queſtion about the will and intent of God, the reſolution of it muſt be had from what he has ſome how or other declared. In the euchariſt, the ends of it are declared to be *two*, and *but two* are ever mention'd. The euchariſt therefore was inſtituted as a means to thoſe ends; nor could there be a more natural, uſeful, intelligible inſtitution than this, before it became

became darkned by a ſett of men, who made it the chanel of I know not what "ſupernatural ſanctifying graces." At length the Euchariſt came to be looked upon as the "inſtrument of abſolution," a "con- P. 59.
"veyance of pardon, the perfection and con-
"ſummation of a chriſtian," as this Author tells us. And he might have added many more uſes that have been made of it, had he been ſo diſpoſed. Whereas in it ſelf, and as it lies in the New Teſtament, its ends were to put men in mind of Chriſt, who died for them, and to ſhew their love and unity to one another, as brethren. Inſtead of this, this ſa- P. 53, 55.
crament is repreſented as every thing; 'tis
"faith, hope, charity, love of God, obeying,
"ſerving, praiſing him, humility, thankſ-
"giving," and whatever a man of parts and imagination can apply it to. Whereas in truth, an act in which all theſe exerciſes of virtue are united, will not neceſſarily raiſe in any one's mind the idea of this ſacrament: and *vice verſa*, the ſacrament may be fully explained as the ſcriptures repreſent it, and not raiſe in any one's mind the ideas of all thoſe virtues: which manifeſtly ſhews that theſe virtues and this ſacrament are not neceſſary concomitants of each other, or reciprocal things.

I muſt next proceed to examine the *third* particular which the remarker has "un-

p. 56. " dertaken to prove, *viz.* that the two ſa-
" craments, beſides their being *productive*
" of virtue," and " parts of chriſtian piety,
" are further alſo the inſtituted ordinary
" means and inſtruments of applying the
" benefit of the great atonement to every
" worthy receiver." This propoſition is very remarkable, as it immediately follows an attempt to prove that the ſacraments are " virtue direct:" becauſe it aſſerts that they " are productive of virtue" and " parts of " chriſtian piety." 'Tis odd, that the very ſame things ſhould be " virtue direct; " *productive* of virtue;" and " improve-" ments upon and refinements *beyond* vir-" tue;" and at the ſame time the exerciſe of many virtues, and yet be " but virtue ſtill," and all this within the compaſs of four pages. He begins his proof of this propoſition with an attempt to confute what had been ſaid in my Anſwer to his Remarks, to ſhew virtue wanted no " additional " improvements." *Moral virtues* I ſaid, *are in* themſelves acceptable *to God; and a holy, good, and juſt being cannot but approve the man that is governed by them. They* want nothing *to make them* acceptable, *nor can any thing make them more acceptable than they are.* Upon reading this, the Remarker ſays, " he knew not what to think " of it, nor whether to call it *Popery* or

Quaker-

" *Quakeriſm.* It is no *Proteſtant* doctrine " I am ſure," ſays he, " unleſs it be the " *Quakers* ſinleſs perfection." If, Sir, you want a name to this, as good a name as I can aſſign for it is, *common ſenſe*, or *common reaſon*; and whether you, or any other *party*-man will admit it or not, 'tis true, and right: and you ſeem to be ſo conſcious of its truth, that you do not ſo much as venture to confute it, unleſs it muſt be deemed a confutation to call it hard names, and to give it ſome term of contempt; a trick which ignorant or artful men are too apt to be guilty of. " Alas, ſays the Remarker, p. 57. " *human* virtues at the beſt are very ſhort " and defective; they are not perfection in " any ſuch ſenſe, as not to need *relief* and " *pardon.* They are no *exact imitation* of " God.—I ſhall not ſtay to prove theſe " plain things." No, Sir, no body deſires it of you; but what I deſire you to prove is, that *moral* virtues are very ſhort and defective, *&c.* But inſtead of *moral virtues*, you are ſpeaking of ſomething elſe: The word *Moral* by ſlight of art is conveyed away, and the word *Human* is ſubſtituted in its place, and by *Human* virtues you do not mean *Moral* virtues, but ſuch virtues as are mix'd with ſins and infirmities in practice; and then truly you ſay, that theſe are not the exact imitation of God, but want

P. 58. relief and ſupply. "For be our virtues "otherwiſe ever ſo great or ſo many, "they will ſtill want the additional relief "and improvement which the uſe of the "ſacrament ſupplies."

'Tis ſomewhat ſtrange that in all this time, when ſo much has been ſaid about "additional improvements upon, and re-"finements beyond virtue," that we have not been able to diſcover once *what* theſe "improvements" and "refinements are", and how the uſe of the ſacrament "ſupplies" them. In this place, where one might reaſonably expect it moſt, not one word is ſaid about it. "The ſacraments, ſays he, are the "channels of remiſſion and pardon." Pardon of what? of virtue? No! The New Teſtament ſays not a word about remiſſion of virtue, or the pardon of *moral actions*, or of *virtuous* practices; but of *ſin* and
P. 58, 59. *iniquity*. So again; "*Cornelius* was a man "of exemplary moral virtues, *a juſt man*, "*and one that feared God*—and yet this "juſt and devout man, whom God him-"ſelf had alſo *cleans'd*—was at length ad-"mitted to *baptiſm*, and thereby perfect-"ed." When this good man was "*cleanſed* "by God himſelf," (I ſuppoſe it was not of his juſtice, devotion and charity, or of any of his moral virtues;) he was "perfected "by baptiſm." How was that? The re-

marker

marker instantly adds, " Baptism is the or-
" dinary means appointed for remission of Ibid.
" *sins*—it was the grand *absolution*, a con-
" veyance of pardon of *sins* to every worthy
" recipient." *Cornelius*'s *sins* then were done away by baptism; but what is that to " additional improvements upon and re-
" finements beyond virtue? Or how does this prove, that " virtue has *no efficacy* to-
" wards procuring salvation till 'tis ren-
" der'd acceptable by the sacraments?" It proves indeed that sin will hinder salvation, and that we stand in need of great allowances for our infirmities and failings: but still virtue is virtue, and not vice, and I think ought not to be confounded all along with vice.

From baptism he proceeds to the other sacrament, and observes that this too " by p. 59.
" the antient churches was looked upon as
" an instrument of absolution, the per-
" fection of a Christian, there being no
" higher *mystery* that an *ordinary* Christian
" could partake of." Were the present controversy about *names*, or notions of people that have been call'd Christians, *i. e.* the history of opinions of men, it would be allowable to talk in this manner. But where does the scriptures use this unintelligible jargon? where does the scriptures call the sacrament of the Lord's-Supper a *Mystery*?

Or,

Or, for the ſake of religion and common ſenſe, ſay *why* do men give ſuch a name to ſo plain a thing? But the Euchariſt is not only repreſented here as a *Myſtery*, but as one than which there is "no higher that an *ordinary* chriſtian could partake of." To "partake of a myſtery, to partake of a "high" one,—is a language, I mean a jargon, that thoſe who are verſed in the *depths* of ſcholaſtic nonſenſe may talk about; but to a ſincere chriſtian, who wants evidence from ſcripture for what he is to believe, and practiſe, you ſhould in juſtice, in equity, name the paſſage of an Apoſtle on which ſuch doctrine is founded. Say, Sir, ſince this is a *Myſtery*, than which there is "no higher" that an "*ordinary* "chriſtian can partake of," is there any "higher myſtery" for *extraordinary* chriſtians to partake of? Say diſtinctly, who are the *ordinary* Chriſtians? Say clearly who are the *extraordinary* ones, or thoſe not included in the term "*ordinary* chriſtians? Tell us explicitly, what *higher*, and what *lower* myſteries, theſe two ſorts of chriſtians partake of. Tell us which are the *higher*, and which are the *lower* myſteries: Say, what is the difference betwixt a *higher* and a *lower* myſtery: or if the word, *myſtery*, ſignifies what you do not underſtand, tell us clearly what that is which is *higher*, and what is *lower*, in what you do not underſtand: and remember the

rules,

rules, from which as often as you ſwerve, you muſt expect to be recall'd; I mean ſcripture and common ſenſe.

When this repreſentation of the Euchariſt, as the higheſt myſtery, is made, he endeavours for ſeveral pages together to ſhew how "pardon is ſealed" unto us by the Euchariſt. Strange! that ſo frequent a uſe of the words *pardon*, *abſolution*, *remiſſion*, ſhould not once make him ſee that he is ſpeaking of *vice* all the while he would be thought to be ſpeaking of *virtue*. But ſo it is, when any man is prejudiced for or againſt a notion, he is unable to ſee the difference betwixt light and darkneſs. I ſaid in the anſwer to the remarks, that not one word of this doctrine (that moral virtues have no efficacy towards procuring ſalvation) was contained in ſcripture. The obvious way of anſwering this, was by producing chapter and verſe, and ſhewing me by that how much I was miſtaken. But inſtead of this, he cries out,—"Strange! when it has *already* been proved from Scripture, and "might be done more largely ſtill, that "God by the ſacraments conveys both "grace and pardon; which is the *ſame* "thing with ſaying that the ſacraments are "*additional* improvements upon virtuous "practices." In truth, 'tis very "ſtrange" that no anſwer is given to what I objected; nor no proof

p. 63.

p. 64.

proof produced from ſcripture for what he is ſo expreſſly call'd upon Even here he ſays, "the ſacraments convey both grace and par-"don." What? the pardon of virtue; no ſurely; but pardon of ſins; and truly this is the ſame "as ſaying that the ſacraments "are *additional* improvements upon virtue." The free pardon of ſin is an inſtance of great goodneſs and mercy in God; but how the pardon of ſin is "an additional "improvement upon virtuous practices" is perfectly unintelligible. A maſter forgives his ſervant an offence; or a king forgives his ſubject an act of treaſon or rebellion. Is this the ſame as a "refinement beyond," or an "additional improvement upon" the obedience of the ſervant, or the loyalty of
p. 64. the ſubject? yes, ſays the Remarker; "They "improve them two ways; firſt as aug-"menting them;" *i. e.* pardoning a fault is increaſing virtues; pardoning the blunders of a writer is increaſing his excellencies; overlooking the faults of a ſervant is increaſing his good qualities: which virtues, excellencies, or good qualities, are ſtill exactly the *ſame as they were*, neither improved nor diminiſhed. The "*ſecond* way "of improving virtuous practices by the "ſacraments," or which is the ſame "by "grace and pardon," is by rendring them ſaving by the application of Chriſt's all-ſufficient expiation to THEM. God for-

 bid!

bid! I won't pretend to ask for a text of ſcripture for this new doctrine. Apply Chriſt's expiation to virtuous practices! I ever thought that his expiation was to be applied to *ſins*; to *vicious*, not to *virtuous* acts. But good muſt be called evil, and evil good; virtue muſt be treated as vice, and vice as virtue; heaven and earth muſt be confounded, in order to make out this new ſyſtem of morality and grace. I ask'd in my former book, "*Did our Saviour or his Apoſtles ever treat virtue in this manner?*" I am anſwer'd here— "Yes, every where, and conſtantly. Our bleſſed Lord teaches us not to confide in *our own virtues*, but in *his* mercy and grace; inſtructs us to call our ſelves *unprofitable ſervants* after we have done our beſt, and all that was commanded us. And he lets us know further, that whatever our moral virtues may be, yet except we eat the fleſh of the ſon of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us, *i. e.* unleſs we partake of the benefits of his paſſion. The Apoſtle *Paul* almoſt in every epiſtle, teaches and inculcates the ſame doctrine, that no man ſhall be ſaved on account of his works, or his moral virtues,—but by the blood of Chriſt. And St. *John* ſays, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.*

p. 65.

Luke xvii. 10.

" Can any man call theſe plain certain " things in queſtion."

'Tis ſomewhat extraordinary, that a man ſhould undertake to write a book to ſatisfy his *friends*, as well as adverſaries, about aſſertions he had dropt; and never once ſcarce to keep the point that was to be proved in view. 'Twas maintain'd in the
Rem. p. 85. *Remarks*, " that moral virtues—have no pro-
" per efficacy towards procuring ſalvation,
" till they are improved and render'd ac-
" ceptable by the ſacraments." This is repreſented as ſo " plain and certain" a principle, " every where and conſtantly" taught in the New Teſtament, that he would ſeem to wonder how " any man can call it in " queſtion." On the contrary, there is not, that I know of, one ſingle text that teaches any ſuch doctrine. The paſſages this Author cites are, St. *Luke* xvii. 10. a text which proves indeed that when we have done our beſt, we have done no more than our duties; that we are not *profitable* ſervants to God, that we have done no more than what we were obliged to do. But how does this prove that " Virtue is of *no efficacy* to " unite us to God, or to procure ſalvation, " till 'tis improved and made acceptable by " the ſacraments." To do our duties, is, and muſt be, acceptable to a good and juſt maſter; and he could neither be good

nor

nor juſt, if our duties were not acceptable to him. The ſecond text cited, is, *John* vi. 53. *Except ye eat the fleſh of the ſon of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* To which I reply, That this paſſage can't be proved to relate to the ſacrament, which was not inſtituted till ſome years after theſe words were ſpoken. Beſides, the fleſh which Chriſt promiſed to give, was the ſame as the bread which came down from heaven: *I am the living* bread *which came down* ver. 51. *from heaven, if any man eat of this* bread, *he ſhall live for ever, and the* bread *that I will give is my* fleſh, *which I will give for the life of the world.* Now eating this *bread* is expreſly interpreted by our Saviour himſelf to be the ſame as believing in him. *I am the bread of life, he that* ver. 35. cometh to me, *ſhall never* hunger, *and he that* believeth *in me ſhall never thirſt.* So that in this text here is not a word about the *ſacraments*; nor in conſequence about their *improving* moral virtue. Nay, ſuppoſing that this relates even to the Paſſion of Chriſt, (as the Remarker ſays it does) yet even ſtill, it does not prove that moral virtues have *no efficacy* towards procuring ſalvation. For moral virtues are duties, and are "neceſſary conditions," and are p. 65. "required" as ſuch; and being "required," they muſt be obſerved, and being acts of

obedience, were there no other reaſon, for that alone, they muſt have *ſome* efficacy towards pleaſing God and procuring his ſalvation to them that obey him: whereas the Remarker ſays that they have *no* efficacy.

3*dly*, He quotes St. *Paul*, as "almoſt "in every epiſtle teaching, that no man "ſhall be ſaved on account of his moral "virtues." St. *Paul* ſpeaks indeed of our not being *juſtified by works:* but then the reaſon is, that all have *ſinned*, and ſtood in need of *pardon*, and were obnoxious to judgment on account of their *tranſgreſſions*, not of their *virtues*. And conſiſtently he tells us, that we are *juſtified by faith*, we are *juſtified freely by the grace of God:* but not once has he ſaid, that we are juſtified by the ſacrament; not once that That will "finiſh what moral virtue begins."

Rom. iii. 24.

Laſtly, 'Tis added from St. *John*, *The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin.* True. 'Twas never denied or diſputed by me. Admitting therefore this to be a "clear "and certain principle," what is the inference againſt me, or for the Remarker? Is it this?—The *blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.*—Therefore the receiving the ſacrament *augments* our *virtues*,——or, Therefore virtue has no efficacy towards procuring ſalvation. Theſe conſequences will require proof, and very ſubſtantial proof

proof too; for they will ſcarce be admitted upon any man's mere authority.

When I ask'd, "*Did our Saviour or his* "*Apoſtles in any one inſtance ever declare* "*that moral virtues have* no proper effi- "cacy *towards procuring ſalvation.*"—The anſwer is—"yes, in the inſtance of *Cor-* "*nelius.* But beſides that, the whole te- p. 65. "nour of the New Teſtament declares that "the blood of Chriſt, and his merits, have "a proper efficacy towards procuring the "ſalvation of men, and that nothing elſe "has."

I ſhall not add any thing to what I have ſaid in relation to the caſe of *Cornelius*. As to the blood of Chriſt having a proper efficacy towards procuring ſalvation—that is not the queſtion; but,—whether virtue has *no efficacy* towards procuring ſalvation till 'tis improv'd by the ſacraments: and for this I repeat my demand,—where in ſcripture is ſuch a notion?

'Tis ſo tedious to be always calling a writer to the point in queſtion, that I will paſs over what remains upon this head as all foreign to the point. But 'tis fit to examine a little his *additional* note, wherein he declares "the two ſacraments "to be *ſeals* of the goſpel covenant," and p. 85. which he calls his "main principle." As "current doctrine" as this is imagin'd to be,

I muſt

I muſt firſt obſerve, that neither baptiſm, nor the euchariſt, are ever called by that name in ſcripture. Men may write, and uſe a language of their own; but till they can be brought to think the mind of God is as well expreſſed in the words of God as in the words of men, they will always be in danger of miſleading people, and of intruding their own opinions and fancies, inſtead of the will of God. We have here
p. 85. a remarkable inſtance of this kind. "Bap-
" tiſm, ſays this Author, ſucceeds in the
" room of circumciſion, and is ſtiled the chri-
" ſtian circumciſion by St. *Paul*." From hence he infers thus.—Circumciſion is call'd the *ſeal* of the covenant in the *Jewiſh* law; therefore Baptiſm is the *ſeal* of the Chriſtian covenant. We are referr'd for the proof of all this to *Col.* ii. 11, 12.

Now here, this "main principle," this "current doctrine," will want ſome further proof; ſome other text of ſcripture to ſupport it. For in this place, St. *Paul* does not call Baptiſm a *ſeal* of the goſpel covenant; and allowing that he had call'd it chriſtian *circumciſion*, which may be queſtion'd, yet the inference which the Remarker draws will not follow. The Apoſtle's words are, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *In*
Col. ii. 11, 12. *whom alſo ye are* circumciſed *with the* circumciſion *made without hands, in putting*

ting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion of Chriſt, buried with him in baptiſm, wherein alſo ye are riſen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raiſed him from the dead. The chriſtian circumciſion, or the circumciſion of Chriſt, is expreſsly defined to be, *the putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh*; this was very aptly repreſented to the *Coloſſians* by baptiſm, wherein they were buried, and roſe again to a new life. This place indeed will prove that the *Coloſſians* by chriſtian *circumciſion* were put in mind to put off the whole body of ſin, being buried with Chriſt in baptiſm; but then it does not prove that "the ſacra- p. 66.
"ments are ſeals of the covenant," or that "the covenant never commences at all "*without baptiſm*, nor is never *renewed* "but by the Euchariſt." But admitting even all this too, (for I would willingly avoid as much diſpute as I can) yet ſtill it does not follow that moral virtues want "additional im-"provements;" or that "they could only "lead to the door of ſalvation, which the uſe "of the ſacraments opens, and lets us in."

There is but one point more that I think neceſſary to be examined, and that is this; p. 67.
"whether "the ſacraments may be com-"pared to moral duties, and in ſome caſes "preferr'd before them." This I think will

receive a ſufficient anſwer from what has been already ſaid, and needs not a particular diſcuſſion. The two ſacraments are obligatory to us becauſe preſcribed: moral duties are univerſally obligatory in themſelves, and never to be diſpens'd with. God himſelf cannot diſpenſe with ingratitude, unmercifulneſs, inhumanity: and where diſpoſitions to theſe are, he muſt be diſpleaſed with them. On the contrary, he cannot but approve mercy and gratitude and juſtice, and every virtue, where-ever it appears amongſt men. As religion conſiſts in the practice of theſe, and all other moral virtues, from a ſenſe of the being of God, moral virtues are the things which God *cannot but* require.

When I ſay that God *cannot but*, or in other words, is *obliged* to require moral virtue; 'tis fit to obſerve what I did not before take notice of, *viz.* with what
p. 16. ſenſe this Author ſays that "All obligation "is to be reſolved into ſome *law*, natural "or revealed." What is the meaning here of the word, *Law?* If by that is meant, *the will of a ſuperior*, 'tis impoſſible that God can be under any *obligation*, becauſe he can be under no *Law* in this ſenſe of the word: nor can he be *obliged* to be juſt, or good, or faithful to his promiſe. Whereas the Truth is, God is *obliged* to be good: and *Law* does not *create*, but *declare* an obligation with a particular Sanction.

If

If by *Law*, is meant, *regula moralis*, or *regula morum*, that which regulates the practice " of moral agents:"--What is that rule which p. 7. regulates the practice of God, for God is a moral agent? Let the Remarker ſpeak diſtinctly to this, and ſay, what that is which regulates the actions of God, and does not oblige God; or whether it does *both*; or if but *one*, which that is, and what is the difference betwixt obliging God, and regulating the actions of God. But I proceed to the Point in debate,

Moral virtues are always, and cannot but be required by God. Now as mankind is ſet in the midſt of numberleſs temptations, as they are full of infirmities and failings, and too too often neglect and break their duties, the great and wiſe God has inſtituted proper *means* to virtue, has given us memento's of our duties; by frequent conſideration and practice of which, we ſhould renew in our minds the ſenſe of our obligations. This is what is meant by the two ſacraments; the one is *Baptiſm*, by which, as by an emblem or ſign, is repreſented to us a ſtate of purity; the other is, a conſtant memorial of our ſaviour's death for us, and of the obligation we are under to live like brethren, eating and drinking together as friends. Can there be more proper, more ſuitable means than theſe, to excite us all to virtue? When therefore this Author objects his fears " that the means p. 74.

" may be laid aſide, could the end be ſecur'd;" He forgets that mankind are far, and ever will be far, from being morally virtuous, and till they are virtuous, theſe means will be of perpetual uſe. Were we free from the paſſions and temptations we now are ſubject to, I do not imagine we ſhould have ſuch memento's as theſe: and till men become free from paſſions and temptations, the ſacraments will be of conſtant uſe. 'Tis therefore an abſurdity in our Author to guard againſt the laying aſide the ſacraments, by recommending them as "all virtue in a com-" pendium;" ſince they are, and muſt be what they are, inſtitutions, preſcribed for certain ends, and not the ends themſelves. But becauſe this matter is mightily darkned by words without knowledge, and the efficacy of the ſacraments is ſo much contended for, I will endeavour here to lay down, in a few words, all that the ſcriptures have ſaid upon the euchariſt.

Matt. xxvi. 26, 27. Our Saviour juſt before he died, *took* bread *and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to his diſciples, and ſaid, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the Cup and gave Thanks, and gave it to them, ſaying, drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.* St. *Luke* has added the reaſon of this

this command, *This* do *in* remembrance *of me.* St. *Paul* has exactly the same injunction. Here then is *one* end distinctly specified. A *second* end is mentioned, or rather is to be infer'd from, *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ; for we being many, are one bread, and one body; for we all partakers of that one bread. Behold* Israel *after the flesh*, &c. The meaning of which is this; for from the meaning we are to gather the *second* end I mentioned. The apostle's design was to bid the *Corinthians* flee from Idolatry, and his reasoning stands thus. "The Sacramental Cup we drink, Is it not a symbolical drinking of the blood of Christ? "The sacramental bread which we break, "Is it not a symbolical eating of the "body of Christ? Is it not partaking of "the blood and body of Jesus, and by "that means a figurative expression of our "being one with him, and of our being "members of his body? For tho' we "are many in number, yet we are all "but one mystical body, and one Loaf "feeds us all, for we are all partakers of "that one Bread."— Ye cannot eat and "drink at God's Table, and be κοινωνοὶ

ch xxii 19.

1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

1 Cor. x. 16.

partaker of fellowſhip with him, and eat and drink at a demon's Table, and be partakers of fellowſhip with him. The *ſecond* uſe therefore of this Inſtitution is, to be in perfect friendſhip with Chriſt, and with one another, as being all *the body of Chriſt, and members in particular*, united for the carrying on the good of the whole. No other uſes are mention'd of this Sacrament; and conſequently as theſe *are* aſſign'd, we can ſee the ends propoſed. Now as the end is always worthier than the means, it follows that unity with Chriſt and Friendſhip with Chriſtians is preferable to the means appointed to be made uſe of to thoſe ends.

You'll ſay perhaps, May I neglect the means? I anſwer, Yes, if you have the end, and can conſtantly, and never failingly enjoy it: Juſt as you are to omit theſe means, when you are quit of this body, and free from the danger of falling away. But this is not to be expected whilſt we are here; but on the contrary the Rule is, *let him that ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall.* The beſt of men will always ſtand in need of proper remembrances of their duties, and thefore they will always continue to ſhew forth the Lord's death till he comes.

I know the Author, whom I am here conſidering, imagines more to be contained in the Text, *The Cup of bleſſing*, &c. than that which I fix as its meaning: He thinks that the Apoſtle does mean more than aſſociating our ſelves with Chriſt: That it implies "a real participation on our parts p. 60.
"of the Merits or Benefits of the great
"Atonement, ſo far as reſpects the wor-
"thy communicant." But the Context and the Apoſtle's Argument, muſt help to determine the meaning, and not the Text alone conſidered. He tells the *Corinthians* that by eating things ſacrificed to demons they made themſelves members of and friends to thoſe demons and their worſhippers, in the ſame manner, as thoſe who eat of God's altar or table were in friendſhip with God and his worſhippers. Juſt ſo we Chriſtians by eating of the body and blood of Chriſt are in friendſhip with Chriſt and all Chriſtians. What is here of a "real participation of the Merits
"and Benefits of the great Atonement," or how will the Apoſtle's reaſoning proceed when he is conſidered, as arguing to people that were to flee from Idolatry? But to proceed.

The two uſes I have taken notice of, are mentioned of this Sacrament. But I find nothing further about it: No particular gracious promiſes annexed to it; no other ends of it: And therefore I

own,

own, I have often ſtood amazed at the dark and unaccountable things wrote and preached upon this ſubject. The preſent Book I have been conſidering is about the *efficacy* of the Sacraments. 'Twould have been well to have told us in what their *efficacy* conſiſts; for 'tis a hard word, and never that I remember at all uſed in the Scriptures, much leſs is it applied to either of the Sacraments. Would to God that men would be content with the Scripture accounts of things, and not make ſyſtems out of their own heads, and hand them out to the world as divine Truths, to the everlaſting confuſion of the ignorant, to the ſorrow of good men, and to the ſcandal of Chriſtianity! But I forbear.

Perhaps it may be expected that I ſhould ſay ſomething to the concluſion of this Pamphlet, which inſinuates, I know not what miſchief portended againſt Chriſtianity from the extolling morality. I my ſelf have extolled morality very much, and cannot forbear extolling it ſtill, and am ſo far from thinking that moral virtues are *mean and low things*, or that they have the *nature of ſin* in them as this Author does, that I ſhould be glad to hear an exact diſtinction made betwixt the gratitude, humanity, juſtice, and charity in *Socrates*, and gratitude, humanity, juſtice, and charity in any Saint, St. *Athanaſius* if you pleaſe:

pleaſe: when this is done, I would have it proved, that *Socrates*'s gratitude, humanity, and charity " has the *nature of ſin*," p. 6, 7. and *Athanaſius*'s gratitude, humanity, and charity is perfectly *virtuous*. *Socrates* ſees a Man in want, and relieves him from the ſenſe he has of common humanity; and a principle that 'tis right in it ſelf; and agreeable to the will of the ſupream cauſe of all: *Athanaſius* ſees a Man in want and relieves him from a ſenſe of what you pleaſe. The *Pagan* virtues of the one are ſo exactly like to the Evangelical virtues of the other, that one Egg is not liker to another than theſe acts are. Why is one *ſin*: The other virtue? Why truly *Socrates*'s act is " *defective in Principle*, " *and in direction*." No: 'tis *good* " in prin- " ciple," and right in the " direction." But it " *wants the grace of God*." No again; it has it, or elſe you can tell us what the *Grace* in one is, which is not in the other. 'Tis this way of talking of Chriſtianity, which I think, chiefly expoſes Chriſtianity to the attacks of Deiſts. And whilſt morality is debas'd, and additional improvements are talk'd of, which no one can perceive, or explain, Deiſts will always gain ground againſt ſuch repreſenters of Chriſtianity. I therefore own my ſelf ſurpriſed at hearing ſuch opinions propagated as theſe; — " Had thoſe good men

" who

p. 82. " who first opposed *Antinomianism*, by " extolling morality, lived to see the " turn that has since been taken, they would " now have extoll'd *positive Institutions* " as much, were it only to secure true " morality: For 'tis demonstration to " every thinking man that morality can " never stand in practice, but upon a " Scripture foot." One that imagines there is no such thing as *Truth* and *Falshood*, may talk thus; He may be for *ballancing* opinions, and as one happens to prevail, he may be for adding weight, I mean words, to the other. But the question will be, which is *true?* Or is either? If one be true, what absurdity is it to talk of ballancing notions; first preach one doctrine, than another; just as if the people were only to be in the fashionable opinion, and truth were out of the question. This is to make men Atheists, or Infidels, and to teach them to discard all Religion, instead of bringing them to the true one: and if men that are convinc'd of the truth of morality shou'd oppose an instituted Religion that is thus represented, I fear they would be able sufficiently to justify themselves to all reasonable men; and that the fault of their Infidelity would lie at the door of such, as make the way to the belief of Christianity impossible, from the absurd representations of it.

APPENDIX.

'TIS obſerv'd by the remarker in the concluſion of his diſcourſe about the *efficacy of ſacraments*, that *deiſm* has ſprung up out of the famed diſtinction of moral and poſitive duties. The manner in which this has been done is thus declared.

1*ſt*. " Men of corrupt minds have *joined* p. 80, 81.
" in this cry — that poſitive inſtitutions
" were of an inferiour nature to moral;"
" and therefore are to be conſidered, but as
" means to an end. Next, They look
" upon the whole chriſtian religion as a
" poſitive ordinance, and ſubſervient only
" to morality. *Laſtly*, " For the finiſhing
" ſtroke, they give broad hints that the
" means might conveniently be ſpared,
" ſince the end they imagined might be
" obtained without them. Thus deiſm
" has been grafted upon the famed di-
" ſtinction between moral and poſitive
" duties; and this is the moſt prevail-

" ing topic of the deiſts to go upon at " this day."

This account of the cauſe and growth of *deiſm* will deſerve ſome conſideration. And here my

Firſt remark is, that he begins this repreſentation of the grounds of Deiſm with imputing to all Deiſts the charge of being " men of corrupt minds." A charge, which a *good moral man* wou'd be very cautious of laying in the groſs, upon any number of men, whoſe hearts he does not know, nor whoſe ſtudies, or opportunities of coming at the truth, he cannot be a judge of. But

Secondly, This is merely an *invidious* repreſentation of the riſe and growth of deiſm amongſt us: *viz.* that it has ſprung from what *chriſtians* have ſaid in commendation of morality. Chriſtians have inſiſted upon it, that poſitive inſtitutions are of an inferior nature to moral, and deiſts have *joined* with them in this cry. Very well: Thus far both chriſtians and deiſts are right, and no deiſts can run down all revealed religion from this principle; for 'tis impoſſible that any argument can be more weak than this, — Morality is preferable to poſitive Inſtitutions, therefore all Revelation is falſe, or uſeleſs, or of no real advantage. But

Thirdly,

Thirdly, This is, I apprehend, a very *falſe* repreſentation of what Deiſts ſay for themſelves: for no Deiſt can prove the *falſhood*, or uſeleſneſs of Revelation from this principle, that " poſitive Inſtitutions are " inferior in nature to moral ones." But they argue further -- That there are no ſuch poſitive Inſtitutions as are pretended. The former of theſe principles is right and true; and no harm to chriſtianity can follow from it: 'tis certain that the latter will not follow from thence; becauſe 'tis always *poſſible* that God *may* command a poſitive duty; and if he has, it ought to be obeyed, tho' it be of an inferior nature to a moral Duty. But

Fourthly, Suppoſing a Deiſt were to inſiſt, that poſitive duties are inferior in nature to moral ones, and this author were to attempt to convert him to chriſtianity, and to begin with a confutation of this — What an *additional* labour is here to be undertaken? And how much more is the defence of chriſtianity embarraſſed? How much *time* and *pains* will be ſpent in *explaining* and *proving* the propoſitions which he has aſſerted in this very book, and which are ſtill to be proved? How much cloud and darkneſs ſurround them? All this is not only to be ſurmounted; but more than this is to be done againſt his deiſt: he muſt not only prove a *true* propoſition

to be *falſe*; but when that is done, he has got *a falſe* propoſition to prove to be *true*. He is not only to prove this propoſition to be falſe, *viz.* poſitive inſtitutions are of an inferior nature to moral ones — but he muſt likewiſe prove that "there may be as great virtue, or greater "in obeying poſitive precepts, as in obey-"ing moral ones." Why ſhould men chooſe to embarraſs the controverſy about the truth of chriſtianity more than needs muſt?

But as my deſign in mentioning this, was not to leave ſo important a point in this manner, I will take this opportunity of ſuggeſting what I apprehend to be the true method of proceeding in the argument againſt *ſerious* and *rational* Infidels; and by what ſteps chriſtianity may be proved to *ſuch*: For as to ſcoffers at all religion, as to "men of corrupt minds," 'tis not to be expected that any arguments, or any truths can prevail on ſuch. And here

1. I cannot but think it a very improper method of proceeding to declaim againſt *morality*, as inſufficient to make men acceptable unto God. 'Tis an unaccountable way of arguing, to ſay that
P. 57, 58. "morality is ſhort and defective," that "it "ſtands in need of pardon," that "moral "virtues

" virtues are all light in the ballance, and " have no proper efficacy in themſelves " towards procuring Salvation." He that can argue in ſuch a manner, in reality betrays the cauſe he would ſeem to defend, and can never convince a deiſt, nor prove to him the neceſſity or uſefulneſs of the chriſtian diſpenſation.

2. No man ought to contend againſt the force, or obligation, or ſufficiency of *reaſon*: reaſon is reaſon, how, and in what way ſoever men arrive at it. It ſignifies nothing, whether one man, or another, has argued right in every ſtep, and in every concluſion he has drawn. But the point is, Will ſuch a conſequence follow from ſuch premiſſes? If it will, 'tis nothing to the purpoſe from whence I obtain the *light* I have: or how I come to argue in ſuch a manner. The religion of nature is capable of being ſhewn to be obligatory upon reaſonable creatures: And reaſon muſt be firſt heard, and its dictates followed, before you can know that there is a revelation: and after that you are convinced that there is a revelation, even ſtill reaſon is to maintain its province, and you are to judge of every thing in that revelation by it; the meaning of every command, and of every prohibition, is to be examined, and determined by it; and every

every doctrine revealed is to be ſearch'd into, and if any one be found inconſiſtent with reaſon, it cannot be admitted. A man may acknowledge that he was taught from revelation to reaſon right about the obligations of morality, juſt as he may confeſs that he was taught to reaſon right about philoſophical matters from the diſcoveries made in philoſophy by Sir *Iſaac Newton*. But ſtill reaſon is reaſon however diſcovered: and muſt be attended to by man, *as man*; nor is it more, or leſs, reaſon, on account of the *means* by which it is obtained; but whatever, by means of any light, is capable of being proved, that is properly reaſon: and all duties to others, ſo proved, are what we mean by morality. Therefore

3. It is not a right method of convincing an infidel, to argue againſt him, that morality, or the law, or the religion of nature, (ſince it is the dictate of reaſon,) is not the univerſal religion of mankind: For all are, and muſt be bound by it, as reaſonable creatures; and whatever appears to be rational in either our duties towards God, or towards man; whatever is reaſonable to be done in any, and in all relations, is our duty. This is ſo far our duty, and ſo much previouſly eſteem'd to be the rule of our actions, that when

we

we meet with commands in ſcripture, or notions there inculcated, every ſenſible chriſtian recurs to this, as his rule, by which he judges of the meaning of a text. *e. g. I ſay unto you,* reſiſt not Evil, *but whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other alſo. And if any man will ſue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak alſo. — Give to him that* asketh, *and from him that would* borrow *of thee,* turn thou not away. *Love your* Enemies, *and do good and lend,* hoping *for* nothing again. *Love not the world, — pray without ceaſing — honour the Son even as the Father — ye ought to waſh one another's feet — abſtain from blood and things ſtrangled,* &c. When we meet with ſuch precepts as theſe, we recur to what reaſon dictates to be the meaning of them, and explain them accordingly: For an unreaſonable command is not fit to be impoſed upon reaſonable creatures: Nor can a reaſonable Being require an unreaſonable obedience. Therefore Matt. v. 39—42. Luke vi. 35.

4. Since the religion of nature is univerſal, and obligatory upon all, that principle ſhould be *conſiſtently* and *uniformly* allowed, in all its conſequences. From thence 'twill follow, that by the religion

ligion of nature men may know that God *is*, and *what* he is; and *how* God is to be worſhipped: that will ſhew how men, beings placed in the circumſtances they are, full of paſſion, full of infirmities, and ſurrounded with variety of temptations of all ſorts, may be reconciled to and accepted by God: that will ſhew a future State of rewards or puniſhments: and that will ſhew the duties we are to practiſe to one another. He that doubts of all this, may ſee it demonſtrably proved in Mr. *Woollaſton*'s immortal book, *The Religion of Nature delineated.*

When therefore any deiſt or Infidel pleads for the ſuperior excellency of moral duties to poſitive ones; or for the religion of nature, or for the ſufficiency of reaſon to be a guide in matters of religion, — theſe ſhould not be the ſubject of controverſy, but may be all ſafely admitted: for 'tis certainly true, that they who, to magnify revelation, and to ſhew 'tis abſolutely neceſſary, endeavour to weaken the force of the religion of reaſon, do, in reality, ſtrike at all religion.

Admitting therefore theſe principles, what will follow? Is chriſtianity uſeleſs? That it has not very great and very good advantages? That it is falſe? No; not one of theſe conſequences follow. And therefore

the

the deiſt, that has proved the religion of nature to be perfect, has not by that proved chriſtianity uſeleſs. And they that think, that to "extol morality, is a plea for infidelity," ſeem neither to know the true uſe of belief, nor the advantage of chriſtianity.

To explain therefore this a little further. Morality wants nothing to make it acceptable to God: and the religion of nature is very perfect. But *men* are imperfect, and do not practiſe that religion as they ought. Men are frail, infirm, corrupt, ignorant, and very few of them, (if any at all) are what they ought to be. In theſe circumſtances God was pleaſed to ſend our Saviour into the world; by him to give many *Motives* to men to incite them to the performance of their duties. *Motives* given to men to make them perfect, or to help them towards perfection; *Incitements* and *Encouragements* to make them live reaſonably; *Aſſiſtances* in any way to make them do their duties, are very great advantages: not that theſe prove the religion of nature to be *imperfect*, but they make *us* more ready and willing to endeavour to perform it.

Let chriſtianity be conſidered in this light, and ſee how the caſe will ſtand. I will chuſe to expreſs my ſelf in the words of a pamphlet publiſh'd by me three years

ago, entitled, *The true Grounds of the Expectation of the Meſſiah*, leſt any one ſhould ſuggeſt that any late writing hath drove me to take ſanctuary in any new Scheme of defending chriſtianity. " The " religion of nature and that of *Jeſus* are " exactly the ſame, the ſame duties are to " be performed in both, except that in " chriſtianity we have a particular inſtitu- " tion of what are uſually called the two " ſacraments, and we are to pray to God " in the Name of Chriſt. Virtue is the ſame " in both caſes, of equal extent, always " to be proſecuted ſteadily and uniformly, " and vice of all kinds is always to be " avoided. Every man, *as man*, is ſubject " to the law of nature, and accountable " for offences againſt it. But then as God " has diſcover'd by the prophets of the " *Jews*, that he did deſign to ſend a par- " ticular perſon into the world, to whom " he wou'd give dominion, and thro' " whom he wou'd reward all truly vir- " tuous perſons; Chriſtians believe *Jeſus* " to be that perſon — they believe Jeſus " will *judge* mankind, will *reward* every " man according to his works." *&c.*

Chriſtianity then comes in, not in aid to *morality*, which is abſurd, but in aid to *men*; to teach them to *deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*; and accordingly all its de-

ſign

ſign and end is to beget or promote virtue, and to encourage men to practice it. In St. *Paul's* language 'tis *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect throughly furniſhed unto all* good works. Every doctrine and every practice is thus to be underſtood; and as they have a natural and uſeful influence upon our lives, as their tendency is to beget or promote virtue, the connexion of the chriſtian law, and that of nature is viſible, and the reaſon and uſe of revelation appears. Take any particular revelation of the Goſpel, any thing that is not diſcoverable by the light of nature, and its end apparent: *e. g.* That there ſhall be a *reſurrection* of all, both good and bad: that God will *judge* the world by Chriſt. What is more natural than theſe principles to ſhew us, that they that have *done* good *ſhall come forth unto the* reſurrection of life, *and they that have* done evil: to the reſurrection of *damnation.* Our appearance before the *Judgment*-ſeat of Chriſt is therefore revealed, that every man may be aſſured that he ſhall *receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be* good *or* bad. Take any of thoſe doctrines of revelation which contain the

2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

ſcenes of providence, and of God's peculiar government of the world; what are theſe but intended confirmations of Truth; memento's of God and his providence; and in conſequence motives to virtue? The doctrine of the Trinity it ſelf is not a ſpeculative notion, an empty amuſement of mortals: for that would reflect upon the wiſdom of God himſelf to reveal ſuch things as are of no uſe when known: but it has different views and ends, and is of value or concern no farther than as it tends to beget in us virtue, or to influence our lives and behaviour towards God and his Chriſt.

When therefore any man clears up the obligations of morality, and ſhews by ſtrength of reaſon the tie which all are under to live reaſonably, he does a great ſervice to the cauſe of even *inſtituted* religion, becauſe he lays and ſtrengthens its foundation, and confirms the firſt principles of it: whereas if morality is ſhaken by any means, or if its worth, or value be leſſened, or brought into diſeſteem; if it be not kept ſacred and inviolated; all revelation muſt fall, as ſtanding upon that baſis alone.

The deiſt now that argues from the perfection of morality, that revelation is *uſeleſs*, makes an inference which is falſe.

Men

Men are too little apt to uſe their reaſon, and have ſo many avocations from thinking upon duty, that little of that is practiſed as it ought to be by the many. The force of reaſon, and the obligations of virtue, how ſtrong ſoever they may be upon ſome ſedate, thinking, ſerious perſons, yet they are little felt by the bulk of the world; and therefore 'tis fit that ſuch a revelation ſhould be made, as not only might be intelligible to the meaneſt, but might contain ſuch *motives* to *all* to do their duties, as might effectually weigh upon all that were deſirous to know, and to do, what they ought.

Were therefore the empty ſpeculations of artful or idle men diſcarded as little, or not at all, neceſſary for any man to underſtand, or even to hear of; and the uſe of doctrines carefully examined into; and nothing taught, but as it has a connection with virtue; Chriſtianity could never be treated as uſeleſs, on the one hand; and on the other, many doctrines which ſerve only to puzzle and confound, and not to improve mankind, would inſtantly diſappear, as the reveries of idle brains, and not chriſtian doctrines.

Theſe things being eſtabliſhed, the only queſtion then will be, what evidence can be produced to prove that theſe motives and

and assistances are in fact given to the world. And this is to be determined from the evidences which can be produced for the miracles done, and prophecies accomplished, by, and in, Jesus of *Nazareth*. Had christianity thus been asserted and maintained, I persuade my self that the Author of a late Book entitled, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, could not have reasoned in numberless places as he has: nor could he have confounded, whether artfully or undesignedly, christianity and the religion of nature; nor could he have found any thing which would not prove the usefulness, happiness and advantage of revelation: and this is sufficient to make every serious man thankful for all the benefits he receives from it; and it makes the whole contest betwixt Infidels and Christians to be only about the external Evidence for christianity.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

P. 52. *l.* 25. for say, *r.* says. p. 56. *l.* 13. after, promise it, add, or to give it. p. 69. *l.* 29, 30. for scriptures, *r.* scripture. p. 84. *l.* 1. for, partaker, *r.* partakers.

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